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Elinor Reah Levine

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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TEACHERS' ACADEMIC AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS FOR
CHILDREN FROM SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

A Dissertation Presented

By

ELINOR REAH LEVINE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February 1981

School of Education

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1981

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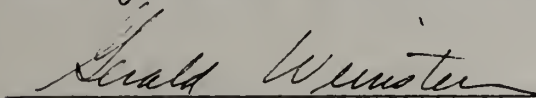
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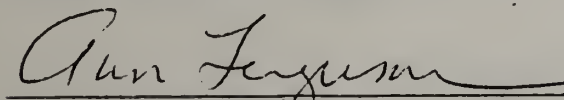
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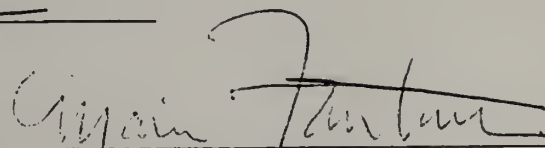
ELINOR REAH LEVINE

Approved as to style and content by:


Sheryl Piechmann, Chairperson of Committee


Gerald Weinstein, Member


Ann Ferguson, Member


Mario Fantini, Dean
School of Education

DEDICATION

To the memory of my beloved friend, Ernestine Eichwald Frankel,
whose dream I hope has now been realized and for my dear son,
Lee Jesse Frankel, whose future I hope will be hereby inspired.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout this personal and professional journey, I have been deeply touched by the many people who cared for me and shared with me. Along the way, I learned many invaluable lessons and am grateful to all who bestowed their gifts upon me. I especially want to thank:

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My parents, Abe and Pearl Levine, who I am pleased to bring the "nachas" they so justly deserve;

And finally, Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society, for awarding me a Grant-in-Aid of Research.

ABSTRACT

Teachers' Academic and Psycho-Social Expectations for children from Single-Parent Families

(February 1981)

Elinor R. Levine, B.A., State University of New at Buffalo
M.Ed., University of Massachusetts, Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Sheryl W. Riechmann

Educators are becoming more aware of the increasing number of children living in one-parent households and are beginning to examine steps schools can take to meet these children's needs. Nevertheless, reports from some single parents reveal that school policies and teachers' attitudes may discriminate against single-parented children.

Literature documents the effects of teacher expectations on a child's academic achievement and self-esteem. As a preliminary investigation into a potentially detrimental phenomena, this study purported to determine whether teachers do hold more negative expectations for children from one-parent than two-parent families. A secondary purpose of the study was to gather parents' perceptions of these same expectations.

To accomplish this, a survey was conducted with a researcher-developed questionnaire. This instrument measured differences in teachers' expectations for children from one- and two-parent families on two dimensions as reported by teachers and parents. Items for the ques-

tionnaire were developed from literature on children from single-parent families and lists of characteristics small groups of teachers and parents believed teachers would use to describe children from one- and two-parent families.

One subscale, consisted of these 13 psycho-social attributes: craves attention, accepts others readily, insecurity, undisciplined, truant, cooperates with peers, embarrassed about family, confused sex-role identity, high self-esteem, frequent expression of anger, unhappy, defiant, and overly fearful. The other subscale consisted of 7 academic attributes: high motivation to achieve, creativity, poor reading skills, incomplete homework, high academic achievement, positive attitude toward school, and good written expression. The questionnaire also collected demographic data. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to assess the reliability of the instrument. Alpha = .89, reflecting an acceptable degree of reliability.

Both the teacher and parent samples were selected from a rural, Northeast, predominantly white, middle-class town. This population was chosen to reduce the confounding effects of race and socio-economic status on the data. One hundred teachers (N=100) comprise the teachers' sample. These teachers were asked to check on a scale the degree to which they expected each attribute on the subscale was more likely to be exhibited by either children from one-parent or two-parent families or whether the attribute was as likely to be exhibited by one as the other. The parent sample (N=102) consists of 32 single-parents and 70 married

parents living with their spouses. Parents were asked to respond to the attributes the way in which they thought a teacher would respond.

Results indicate that overall, these teachers do expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties and lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families. Responses to items on the psycho-social subscale, however, were more negative about single-parented children than those on the academic subscale.

Parents' data show that parents' perceptions of teacher expectations match quite closely teacher reports of their expectations. A high percentage of parents predicted that teachers would hold negative expectations for children from single-parent families. There was, however, a slight discrepancy between teachers own reported expectations and parents' perceptions of these. Parents expected a more negative attitude on the psycho-social attributes than the teachers' results indicated and a slightly less negative attitude on the academic attributes than the teachers' results indicated.

Chi square analysis indicated that a significantly higher percentage ($p < .07$) of conservative teachers hold moderately more negative expectations for children from single-parent families than their liberal colleagues.

The overriding implication of this study is that educators could be faced with the challenge of unlocking yet another inhibitor to equal educational opportunity. Observational research is needed to determine

how/if reported differential expectations for children from single- and dual-parent families are reflected in teacher behavior. Recommendations and conclusions are made which are intended to intervene on individual and systems levels to heighten awareness of and develop acceptance for diverse family structures.

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C H A P T E R I

INTRODUCTION

General Nature of the Problem

The number of children living in single-parent households is increasing. In 1978, these children accounted for 18.5% of the nation's minor population. By 1980, the Census Bureau was estimating that half of all children born that year would spend a significant portion of their childhood living in a single-parent household. Results of a recent survey conducted by The National Elementary Principal (October, 1979) reveal that schools report as high as 90% of their student body come from single-parent homes. These statistics underscore the need for educators to be responsive to this situation and to examine the implications of assuming there are 2 parents in the home.

Members of families and consequently the dynamics of families themselves are affected by their relationships with the institutions with which they have daily contact: schools, places of employment, social service agencies and government offices, neighborhood churches, and the media. Families' experiences with these structures range from support to alienation. Because children spend many hours a day in school, this institution has the potential of being a particularly supportive or destructive influence on children. While all children may find school to be an important and sometimes challenging or threatening place to be, experiences of this researcher, discussions with single parents, and

current research indicate that children from single-parent households may be under additional pressures at school.

In a survey done by Parents Without Partners (PWP) to study the effects of PWP membership on adjustment of children and youth following divorce, parents indicated "difficulties in school" as the most often-mentioned problem (Parks, 1977). Potential sources of these concerns include the following: school textbooks which ignore the one-parent family and portray the never-divorced family almost exclusively; school forms designed for one home with two natural parents present--not two homes with one natural parent and sometimes stepparents; report cards and notices sent to one home (Ricci, 1979); teachers' conferences and parent meetings scheduled at inconvenient times for single parents who are working (Bamber, 1978); and labels such as "broken home" applied to single parent families with the implication that this situation causes juvenile delinquency, academic failure and/or emotional disturbance for the child living in such a home (Robillard, N.D.).

Single parent dissatisfaction with the schools is so common that the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) recently conducted the "Single Parents and the Public Schools Project" to document these concerns. Although the results have not yet been published, findings from the pilot study offer some enlightenment. Phyllis Clay Falk, director of the project says, "their comments showed us that we can't put single parents into a box any more than we can their children" (1979, p. 78). While some parents felt schools would be responsive to their needs if they were informed of the family situation, others adamantly

believed that if the schools knew they were single parents their children would be labeled. Teachers would then have expectations which would bring about behavioral changes in their child. Similarly, some parents desired more communication with the school whereas others said that as long as things were going well they didn't feel that need.

Teachers' and school personnel's responses to children from single-parent homes varies also, according to the NCCE sample of single parents. One mother explained her resentment of the school's assumption that because she is divorced her children are not well taken care of and she is having a hard time. It seems her daughter liked the school lunch stamps and left them on her hand for a few days. When a cafeteria worker noticed them she reported it to the health aide who called the girl into her office. After questioning the child about why she had the stamps on her hands and who was taking care of her, she proceeded to wash the girl's arms. Then the aide sent for the girl's brother and questioned him. The school's response to the mother's irritation at not being contacted and having her children embarrassed was that they thought she already had her hands full. She didn't feel like she had her hands full and resented this assumption on the school's part.

Another mother's story reflects the other side of the coin. Her child's teacher called to express regrets over statements she'd made like "ask mom and dad to help you." She'd just discovered that the child's father had died a few months before and realized the insensitivity of her language.

Some of these and other reports of incidents in the schools reflect

single parents' feelings about school personnel's "discrimination" against them and their children. Particular societal notions and assumptions about what constitutes a family and what the healthiest environment is for a child's development are sometimes used as the basis for policy and curriculum decisions. For a child whose family situation does not conform, these decisions can be upsetting and possibly detrimental to their psychological well-being. In a letter to NETWORK (NCCE's newsletter), one single parent wrote that in a meeting to discuss materials and content of a fifth-grade Family Living course, the teacher explained that only families consisting of a mother, father and two children would be considered "normal." When the parent raised the issue that this gave the impression that other lifestyles were "abnormal," she was again told that these would not be considered "normal." This single parent was concerned about the effect this would have on her adopted son.

These case examples help underscore the potential seriousness of teacher assumptions about families and children from single-parent families. In order to develop teacher education, curriculum assessment practices, and other school-related policies which provide maximum opportunity for the fulfillment of each child's potential, it is important to determine whether and how schools do in fact discriminate in any way against children from single-parent households.

Specific Nature of the Problem

Educators are becoming more aware of the increasing number of

children living in one-parent households and are beginning to examine steps schools can take to meet their needs. Actually, concern over these children is not new. As early as 1957, researchers were studying the academic and behavior adjustment of children from single-parent families. It was, in fact, at this time that Nye (1957) presented the findings of his classic study. He compared the adjustment (in school, family and community) of children from single-parent families and conflict-ridden 2-parent families. No significant difference in school adjustment was found between children from single-parent families and unhappy 2-parent families. Other reported differences were, however, significant. He found that children from single-parent families had better relationships with their parents and lower incidence of psychosomatic illness and juvenile delinquency than children from unhappy 2-parent families. These findings were treated largely as an anomaly for years to come. But this interpretation suggests that the climate of the home is the critical factor in a child's development, not whether the family is legally or physically "broken."

Subsequent research concerned itself with the achievement and classroom behavior of children from one-parent families. Some of the questions addressed were: are there differences in the academic performance of children from one- and two-parent families? What are single-parented children's attitudes toward school? Are math and verbal ability affected by a child's family situation? Do children from single-parent families have more discipline problems (defiance, hostility, aggression, for example) than children who live together with both

of their parents? The answers to these questions have not always been consistent or clear, "...but they have given us expectations of what these children are like--expectations that have tinted our glasses, and not always with a rose-colored hue. Perhaps the fact that the research [was done] at all suggests that our glasses weren't a neutral shade in the first place" (Falk, 1979, p. 76).

The focus of much of this research was on the child and what could be learned about them. Although educators have lately queried over the school needs of children from single-parent families, this same model has persisted. The underlying assumptions about these children and the focus on them and their family life as "the problem" are still evident in even the best-intentioned research. Recently, a study sponsored by the Kettering Foundation and the National Association of Elementary Principals was conducted as Brown, the director said, "in an effort to determine the impact on schools of this burgeoning new problem..." (1980, p. 538). Some of its recommendations for schools are well-intended, impressing upon school personnel that they must accommodate themselves and their activities to the needs of single parents and their children. Yet the results of the study shake a finger at these same children accusing them of more tardiness, discipline problems, suspensions, truancy and expulsions and lower achievement than their dual-parented peers. Calling the study misleading and harmful, critics say it was based on faulty research, incomplete data and confused statistics (Report on Education Research, 1980). One of the particularly misleading characteristics of the report, released to the press, was the confusion of

statistical correlation with causal relation, "as if these children achieved less because they were single-parented" (McCully, cited in Report on Education Research, 1980, p. 3). In reality, the researcher looked at primarily negative information contained in school records and drew comparisons between groups of unequal size as if they were equal. Dissemination of these misleading results have the possible effect of perpetuating generalizations about the effects of living in a single-parent household.

Support for the contention that generalizations made from such studies might be detrimental to the well-being of children from single-parent households comes from the literature on teacher expectations. Since 1964 when Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson conducted their classic "Intellectual Bloomer Study," a link between teacher expectations and student achievement and self-esteem has continued to be forged. Rosenthal and Jacobson administered a test to all the students in an elementary school in a lower socio-economic neighborhood. Although the test was actually a non-verbal I.Q. test, they told the teachers it was a test designed to predict "intellectual blooming" potential. After administration of the test, Rosenthal and Jacobson randomly selected 20% of the children in each classroom and informed their teachers that these students could be expected to bloom in the proceeding months. In actuality, the only difference between the experimental and control students was the induced expectation in the minds of the teachers. Eight months later, both groups were retested.

For the school as a whole they found that the experimental children, those whose teachers had been led to expect 'blooming'

showed an overall gain of four points over the I.Q. gain of the control children...Moreover, it made no difference whether the child was in a high-ability or low-ability classroom. The teachers' expectations benefited the children at all levels (Rosenthal, 1973, p. 58).

Although there was controversy over this original experiment:

...work by a large number of investigators using a variety of methods over the past several years has established unequivocally that teachers' expectations can and do function as self-fulfilling prophecies, although not always or automatically (Brophy and Good, 1974, p. 32).

Rosenthal and Jacobson told teachers that certain of their students would improve academically and then found 8 months later that these children actually did improve. Research such as the recent Kettering study mentioned earlier, although methodologically faulty, draws negative conclusions about children from single-parent families. What impact then does this information have on the expectations teachers hold for their students who live in one-parent homes? It is possible that these studies which reflect a 'normative' lifestyle perspective tend to perpetuate negative expectations for children from variant families.

Up until recently, much of the related research followed a particular model. That model was based 1) on the conceptualization of the single-parent family as a pathogenic deviance from the traditional nuclear family and 2) on the use of an individual variable (such as single-parent status) to attempt to explain a single outcome (such as poor academic achievement) (Levitin, 1979). Lately, some researchers have been basing their work on a newly emerging model. This model recognizes that 1) there are a variety of family constellations which can contribute to the healthy development of the child and 2) in order to

explain outcomes, the interactional process occurring among multiple variables must be examined.

The present study contributes to this new model and focuses in at the level of the teacher. Teacher expectations are the focus of this study because while societally held assumptions may impact on the broader school system it is in large measure teacher expectations which determine the specific learning experiences of the child: the books chosen, the examples used in the class, the pictures put on the bulletin boards, the teacher's behavior, and the models utilized for emulation.

Specifically, this study examines teachers' expectations for children from single- and two-parent families in relation to academic achievement and psycho-social difficulties (e.g., truancy, insecurity, fearfulness). These particular areas are being studied because they are the most germane to the generalizations which arise out of the literature on children from single-parent families.

Purpose and Description of the Study

The purposes of this study are twofold. First, it seeks to determine if teachers' expectations for children from one-parent families are more negative than those for children from two-parent families. It specifically addresses expectations in relation to academic achievement and psycho-social difficulties. There is a dearth of research documenting teachers' expectations for children from variant family forms. Parents have inferred that teachers have negative expectations for children from single-parent families. "Someone should do something about the

attitude of school people toward children from single-parent families. There is a tendency to stigmatize them and be prejudicial," was one parent's response to a principal's inquiry as to what the schools can do to respond to the needs of one-parent families (Damon, 1979, p. 71). However, actual data from teachers are scarce.

The second purpose of this study is to gather information concerning parents' perceptions of teachers' expectations for children from one- and two-parent families. As is apparent by the "Single Parents and the Public Schools Project," data from parents can be useful in and of itself. Data from parents are also being gathered in the present study because there is concern about the social desirability response set affecting the teachers' results. The instrument, described in Chapter III, seeks to examine a sensitive issue and teachers may have some reluctance to casting an unfavorable light on students. For this reason, a survey of parents' perceptions will be conducted. Results indicating that teachers hold positive expectations for children from single-parent families whereas parents perceive them as having negative expectations, might confirm that the social desirability response set is affecting the data. In that case, further research will be recommended to test the validity of the instrument and provide further information on the research or resource questions.

Methodology

To ascertain whether teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties

and lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families, a questionnaire was developed by the author. This questionnaire consists of 2 parts. One part contains 20 paired comparison scale items, the other a series of demographic questions. One hundred teachers from a rural, Northeast, white, middle-class town were administered the questionnaire. An almost identical questionnaire was mailed to 500 randomly selected people from this same town to result in a sample of single and married parents (N=102). Respondents were asked to answer the items on the questionnaire the way in which they believed a teacher would. The survey instruments and letters to participants are included in the Appendix. Frequency distributions and crosstabulations were computed on all the data.

Definitions

To ensure clarity of terms, definitions specific to the purposes of this study are hereby provided.

Expectation is defined in this study as a primarily cognitively derived inference, organized through experience and influencing one's predictions about the present and future.

Academic achievement is defined as attributes which contribute to the accomplishment of learning.

Psycho-social difficulties are mental or emotional attributes which either indicate a lack of facility in relating constructively to other people or are in some way problematic to the healthy development of the child.

A single-parent family is defined in this study as one parent maintaining a household with her/his child(ren). This term was chosen for use on the questionnaire designed for this study because it is commonly understood. The reader will note however that the expression single-parent household is used synonymously in the text. There is a difference, however, in the mental associations made with these expressions. Single-parent family has the connotation that the family consists only of one parent living with his/her child(ren) to the exclusion of the non-custodial parent or an acting parent (e.g., live-in lover). Goldsmith (1979), based on her research, points out that many divorced families are in reality two-parent families though they are one-parent households. She found that a good majority of divorced couples continue to spend some time together (though not on a daily basis) with their children.

For the purposes of this study, a two-parent family is defined as a family in which a husband and wife live together with their child(ren).

Statement of Limitations

One limitation of this study is that it does not account for differences in expectations for children of various subgroups within the domain of the single-parent family (e.g., unwed mothers, lesbian mothers, widowed mothers, single fathers, adoptive fathers). These family variations may experience a more complex form of stereotyping.

Since the scope of this study is limited primarily to white, middle-class persons, the results are not generalizable to other populations.

To assess the generalizability to the overall single parent and teacher populations, other studies need to be done which adequately control for the confounding effects of race and socio-economic status.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation consists of four additional chapters. Chapter II, Review of the Literature, discusses:

- 1) current data and the ideology of the family;
- 2) methodological problems of the research on children from single-parent families, and;
- 3) the relationship between teacher expectations and student academic achievement and self-esteem.

Chapter III, Methodology, describes the overall design and implementation of the study. Topics developed in the chapter include:

- 1) the specific hypotheses tested;
- 2) a description of the samples and procedures used to obtain them;
- 3) design and development of the instrument, and;
- 4) treatment of the data.

Chapter IV contains a report of the analyzed data.

In Chapter V, the results are discussed, implications of the data are presented and recommendations are made for further study.

CHAPTER I I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Societal preoccupation with "the family" is producing an ever-proliferating body of literature expounding on how schools can face the needs and problems of children from single-parent families. It is now widely acknowledged by educators that a growing proportion of the nation's children will sometime during their school years live primarily with one parent. And it is ever more widely advocated that the schools take some responsibility for addressing the needs of these children and their parents. While this recognition is certainly plausible, actions from some of the underlying assumptions may have debilitating effects on these same children it is aimed at helping. This phenomena is vividly exemplified by a recent article appearing in an issue of The National Elementary Principal devoted to these concerns. The article's author, who was a participant at the Anglo-American Conference on One-Parent Families held in England in 1979 and is a school principal, outlined what the schools can do "when the family comes apart" (Damon, 1979). Although many of his suggestions are thoughtful, his discussion of the effects on a child living in a one-parent family is dramatic. He portrays:

...a growing number of children will have to endure the loss from the home of a father or mother, the shock of being uprooted from familiar surroundings and moving to a new neighborhood, the trauma of losing old friends and having to make new ones,

and the disappointment of having to discontinue certain activities because of a shortage of money and time (p. 66) (*italics mine*).

It would be difficult to deny that divorce brings about changes in a child's (and adult's) life. But there is no certain proof that this event always has traumatic and/or enduring negative effects on all children.

Literature on the interface between schools and children from single-parent families is expanding. Nonetheless, only one study investigating the possibility that teachers might hold stereotypic ideas about children from divorced families could be found by this researcher. In many studies of father absence, information was obtained from teachers who have been asked to provide trait ratings of children in their classes. Interpretations from such rating scale techniques have been challenged. Mischel (1973) questioned their validity on the ground that these ratings may reflect the implicit theory of the rater and their (mis)perception of the child's behavior. The possibility that teacher ratings of children may reflect stereotypic notions led Santrock and Tracy (1978) to research teacher expectations for children from one- and two-parent families. What they found was that after viewing a videotape of an 8-year-old boy interacting with friends, a group of teachers who had been told that he lived with only his mother and brother, rated him significantly lower on the traits happiness, emotional adjustment and copes with stress. Another group of teachers who were told that the child was from an intact family, rated him higher on these same traits.

No attempt was made by the researchers to evaluate the stereotyping susceptibility of individual teachers within the groups--this is a methodological weakness of the study. The results, however, are noteworthy when viewed in the context of a child's school day being ordered by the words and actions of such teachers. The expectation literature concludes that teachers' expectations can have an effect on the achievement of children in their classrooms (Brophy and Good, 1974). For this reason, it is important to determine teachers' expectations for children from single-parent households. While the literature does exist on children from single-parent families and on teachers' attitudes toward children in relation to other variables, the Santrock and Tracy study mentioned above is the first, to this author's knowledge, to integrate and expand that literature by examining teachers' expectations for children from single-parent families. The present investigation then is only the second to examine this phenomena.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the present study--a study which attempts to determine whether teachers hold differential expectations for children from single- and dual-parent families. This chapter will create this context in three ways: first, by showing how current family ideology and reality necessitate a closer look at expectations for children from single-parent families; second, by pinpointing how the literature does not uphold the negative generalizations made about these children from single-parent families; and third, by presenting an overview of the Pygmalion literature which documents the effects of teacher expectations on student academic achievement and

self-esteem.

Section One below examines the ideology of the family and assumptions resulting from this ideology, reports current data related to family life and outlines some of the deleterious effects that the gap between actual family life and assumptions about families have on individuals.

Section Two discusses the methodological weaknesses by which reviewers assess the conclusiveness or inconclusiveness of research on children from single-parent families. Then, more specifically, the methodological problems of studies related to academic achievement and psychosocial difficulties are reported in subsections.

The last section (Section Three) of this review of the literature provides an introduction and overview of the expectation literature as well as a description of two particularly relevant studies which conclude that a relationship exists between teacher expectations and student self-esteem and academic achievement.

Ideology of the Family and Current Data

The past decade has been marked by a fascination with the family. Controversy over the demise of the family (Bane, 1976; Keniston, 1977), public policy related to family life (Nye and McDonald, 1979; Schorr, 1979) and causes of family dysfunction (Gil, 1971; Steinmetz & Straus, 1974) are plentiful in the literature. There is, however, a growing number of family researchers who take the position that Americans, both lay and professional, hold to an idealized model of family as

a breadwinning husband, homemaking wife, and their two children (Birdwhistell, 1970; Burgess, 1970; Cogswell, 1975; Howe, 1972; Skolnick, 1973; Schorr & Moen, 1979). Also, this idealized image portrays the family as a sanctum of intimacy, happiness, and comfort (Birdwhistell, 1970). It is the fount of one's emotional and physical fulfillment. And despite statistics that show that divorce has more than doubled in the last decade (Johnson, 1977), Americans think of marriage as a lifelong union (Cogswell, 1975; Schulz and Rodgers, 1975). The vow "for as long as we both shall live" not only reflects the high value society places on marriage but also the negative connotation that divorce means both personal and marital failure (Crosby, 1980).

Birdwhistell (1970) notes that parents believe they should meet all of their children's needs. He says parents maintain that they alone are legally, morally, economically, and religiously responsible to their children as well as responsible for the healthy or pathological personalities their children develop. This model of the breadwinning husband, homemaking wife living together with their children, though in reality only accounting for about 16 percent (U.S. Statistical Abstract, 1977) of American households, is problematic for both citizens and scholars. It causes serious complications for the study of families by distorting the perspective of investigators (Birdwhistell, 1966; Levitin, 1979), leading to the perjorative labeling of other family forms as deviant, broken or unstable (Schorr & Moen, 1979). Birdwhistell (1970) and Jackson and Lederer (1968) concur that this idealized model of the family has deleterious effects. Used as a standard by which to judge

the health or sickness of individuals and families, psychiatrists, psychologists, and other mental health professionals direct their clients toward passive acceptance of the standardized version of familial relationships. The public, in accepting these standards of good, bad, normal, or abnormal becomes upset out of fear that their relationships or marriages don't 'measure up.' For many, the image is unattainable and their attempts to reconcile ideals and roles with reality results in such forms of family turmoil as separation and divorce, child abuse, wife-beating, and intrafamilial homicide (Gil, 1971; O'Brien, 1971; Steinmetz & Straus, 1974).

Cogswell puts it succinctly: "The myth of the idealized nuclear family has become untenable for an undetermined proportion of our society, including both those individuals living in nuclear families and those opting for experimental variant family forms" (1975, p. 391). One such variant family form is the single-parent family. Although some parents are solo by having chosen not to marry, many are single parents due to other circumstances such as separation, divorce, or death. In fact, statistics indicate that almost half of the children born in 1977 will live in a single-parent family sometime during their first 18 years as a result of parental death, separation, or divorce (Glick, 1979). The societal nuclear family ideal (that is, a breadwinning husband, homemaking wife, and their two children) carries with it assumptions and generalizations which can have detrimental effects on children and adults of one-parent families. Burgess (1970) states that the widely held view that it is impossible for the children of single-parent

families to grow up as healthy, normal, mature people creates fear, guilt, and frustration in the single parent. This affects the parents' emotional security and self-confidence which undermines their goal of raising children who feel loved and accepted as normal people. It also can create a sense of inappropriateness, out-of-placeness, or differentness in children which is counter to the development of their full potential as human beings.

The image of the traditional two-parent family has other consequences for the single parent. Schlesinger (1969) points out that social stigma against unmarried, separated and divorced parents can result in feelings of isolation. Solo parents may become estranged from relatives, friends or neighbors and may be excluded from social activities geared toward nuclear families (Weiss, 1973).

Another stigma penalizing the single mother is the notion that a working mother cannot provide for her children the necessary environment for their growth and development (Moroney, 1979). Although this can be problematic for married mothers, the single mother finds herself in a double bind. Staying home with the children may have severe economic consequences for the single mother. Statistics reveal that when a married woman gets divorced she can suspect a substantial decline in her income. In fact, in 1975, 6 percent of married mothers lived below the poverty level compared to 38 percent of single mothers (Bradbury, et al., 1979). On the other hand, working outside the home a mother may feel guilty. Despite research on maternal employment which suggests that it has positive effects on a child's independence, academic

performance and aspirations, myth still holds that children of working mothers are emotionally neglected (Moroney, 1979).

Weitzman (1975) says there is a "hidden contract" in marriage which implies that the husband is the head of the household and responsible for economic support and that the wife is responsible for child care. Discriminatory consequences of this image are severe for women in general and especially painful for single mothers. Many single mothers do not develop job-related skills while carrying and raising children. Also, because they are viewed as marginal workers, they are given a greater proportion of part-time and temporary jobs, are laid off first, have fewer occupational opportunities open to them and are paid about three-fifths as much as men for the same work (Goldberg, 1970). In 1977, this amounted to a median income of \$17,517 for male-headed families (so to speak) in contrast to \$7,765 for female-headed families (Espenshade, 1979). Unattached mothers are not only in the position of singlehandedly making all financial decisions but additionally have the responsibility of figuring out from where the next dollar will come.

Herzog and Sudia (1973) assert that testimony offered by biography, literature, and observation and supported by a small number of research studies indicate that children from father-absent families suffer from a "minority status" as the result of unfavorable stereotypes. They propose that these stereotypes which are generally unsupported by research, be counteracted so that their inaccuracy and adverse effects can no longer cause needless disadvantage to children from father-absent families. Their comprehensive review of the literature on children from

single-parent families was prompted by the nature and frequency of adverse generalizations about the consequences of father-absence and led them to the conclusion that these generalizations are indeed unsupported. Details of the methodological faults which led them to this conclusion are discussed in the next section.

In summary, this section offered some documentation of the effects of the gap between ideality and reality. The image of the family as a breadwinning husband, homemaking wife with their two children pervades society impacting on citizens and scholars alike. In reality, this family form accounts for only about one-sixth of all households and the divorce rate is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times higher than it was 10 years ago. Psychological, physical, and economic consequences of the ideal range from feelings of exclusion and guilt to intrafamilial violence to financial instability.

Literature on Children from Single-Parent Families

In his discussion of the practical clinical considerations and applications of the literature on children from single-parent families, Glick (1979) exclaimed:

There is a bias that the single parent is going to do terribly and that the kids will too. We don't know that yet with any certainty. I don't want to sound like a total cynic, saying that we don't know anything, but we don't know a lot about child development and outcome yet for either intact or single-parent families (p. 148).

Likewise, Raschke and Raschke (1979) in their review of the same literature found:

Much of the literature on the effects of marital separation and

different family structures has been impressionistic journalism and polemical works based on various ideologies, which are for the most part, contradictory and debatable. Even the research-based literature reports contradictory findings... (p. 367).

Although a vast body of literature exists examining how living in a single-parent family affects children, a growing number of researchers agree that the studies are fraught with methodological problems which impede the reporting of any conclusive results (Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1979; Marino & McCowan, 1976). One criticism leveled against the research is that it is conceptualized with a view of the single-parent family as deviant or pathogenic. This view provides a very narrow framework which leads to studying the single-parent family as an aberration of the traditional nuclear family rather than as a form in its own right (Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Hetherington, et al., 1979; Levitin, 1979). Problems and biases in the choice of samples, designs, instruments, and procedures have been the result.

The purpose of this section is to provide a context for the assertion that generalizations made about the academic achievement and psychosocial adjustment of children from single-parent families find no valid basis in the literature. This section will not review the body of literature on children from single-parent families per se. This has been done most adequately by Herzog and Sudia, Shinn, Levitin, and others. Herzog and Sudia (1973) reviewed 400 studies on the effects of father-absence in an inquiry into these questions:

- 1) Are the alleged adverse characteristics more often associated with fatherless homes than with 2-parent homes?
- 2) If so, why?

3) What clues can be drawn from answers to the first two questions concerning ways of diminishing such adverse effects as are shown to be associated with growing up in a fatherless home (p. 142).

Shinn (1978) comprehensively reviewed the literature on consequences of father-absence on children's intellectual development. She focused in particular on studies of cognitive development as measured by standardized tests and school performance. Levitin (1979) summarizes the research on children of divorce, reviewing the major approaches and findings of past research. She also presents some questions for future research and discusses some pitfalls researchers need to guard against.

Overall, the results of these investigations on children from single-parent families offer a potpourri of information. Much of the clinical research on children of divorce describe a variety of outcomes. Feelings of guilt and depression, loss of self-esteem, oedipal problems and associated pathologies are precipitated by a child's loss of a parent. Some studies, however, show a lower incidence of anxiety and neurotic symptoms among single-parented child clinical populations than similar samples from two-parent families.

This discrepant pattern is repeated in studies on juvenile delinquency. Some conclusions are qualified on the association between father-absence and juvenile delinquency. Other studies report a clear association and a few indicate no association between father-absence and juvenile delinquency.

Studies of school achievement often report children from single-parent families as lower achievers than children from two-parent

families. However, other researchers conclude that school achievement is more closely related to factors of race and socio-economic status (SES) than family status.

The drawing of conclusions about children from single-parent families becomes further complicated when the effects of parental absence are seen as mediated by a complex of interacting variables. More and more researchers are concluding that the particular individual characteristics and interactions of present family members and the environmental circumstances of the family are more crucial to a child's development than the number of parents in the home.

In the next section, methodological problems which render the research inconclusive are discussed. Then, in the final subsections, problems more specific to research on academic achievement and psychosocial difficulties (juvenile delinquency, mental illness, and sex-role development) are presented.

Methodological problems. The conceptualization of the single-parent family as a deviance from the traditional nuclear family has led many researchers into dichotomous thinking and an oblivion to subgroups. In their review of the literature on parental absence, Levitin (1979), Marino & McCowan (1976) and Herzog and Sudia (1973) found that gross definitions flawed many studies. Single-parent families are seen as a homogenous group without consideration for subgroup status, that is, whether the parent is divorced, unmarried, widowed, etc. Herzog and Sudia also point out that some subgroups such as stepparent are

sometimes classified as single parent and othertimes as dual-parent families. Conceiving of characteristics on a single continuum which are more accurately conceived as dual continua is another problem (Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Longfellow, 1979). For example, the concepts of masculinity and femininity are placed on a single continuum in much of the sex-role development literature. This practice is reasonably unsound in a time when ideals of manhood and womanhood seem to have shared qualities and are both of value.

A related problem is the use of single variables to try to explain a single outcome. Typically, researchers will use single-parent status as a means of explaining one particular type of outcome, such as mental illness (Levitin, 1970; Pedersen, 1976). Little or no attention is given to possible multiple or related causes and outcomes, resulting in a unidimensional distortion. Herzog and Sudia (1973) also point out that one-time studies provide 'snapshot' pictures which are dubious predictors of a child's long-term development. A child's behavior at one point in time may represent developmental lag or the effects of a host of other environmental, physical, or emotional factors and is not a sound basis for making future predictions.

The provision of inadequate controls is a criticism of reviewers. Levitin (1979) and Marino and McCowan (1976) found that in many studies such variables as socio-economic status (SES) and education were not adequately controlled. In studies which had comparison groups of single-parents and dual-parents, typically these were not matched on age and number of children.

A variety of sampling problems exist in the literature. Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1979) note that most of the studies have used male subjects. This problem is predicated on two false assumptions. First, much of the literature dealing with the development of children raised in one-parent families focuses on the father's absence. "This rubric reflects a bias that when differences are found between children in single-parent and intact families, they are attributed to the absence of the father rather than to differences in family functioning, stresses, and support systems in the two types of families" (Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1979, p. 118).

Secondly, it is assumed that the father's absence will have a greater impact on boys since it is often thought that the father plays a greater role in the development of boys than girls. Herzog and Sudia (1973) indicate that generalizing limited or qualified research findings to populations for which they are not clearly applicable raises serious problems in the research. They cite as an example that different types of father absence are lumped together and the findings are then applied to boys of different ages, different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and different family status. Also, if mostly male subjects are used in these studies, what can they tell us about girls living in one-parent households?

Levitin (1979) suggests other problems in sampling procedures. She indicates that sometimes samples of unknown representativeness are chosen. Clinical samples possess conceptual and methodological faults. Often, these samples are small, self-selected and biased in unknown

ways. Data based on clinical impressions and insights of one researcher may not be replicable by another researcher of a different clinical background and/or perspective. Most important, clinical samples of children from single-parent families represent the reactions of the most distressed of children (Benedek & Benedek, 1979). Children in therapy represent only a small and highly selective proportion of such children and findings therefore, should not be generalized beyond the children in the particular study.

Reliability and validity of measures are questionable in many studies. Levitin (1979) and Herzog and Sudia (1973) agree that some researchers use instruments whose validity is questioned by others. It is extremely difficult to assess conclusions when the instruments used are of dubious quality themselves.

The first part of this section outlined the methodological problems found in the literature on children from single-parent families as discussed by several reviewers. Subsequent subsections further discuss these problems as they relate specifically to studies of academic achievement and psycho-social difficulties.

Academic achievement. Studies of academic achievement often report that children from father absent homes do not do as well in school as children from homes in which the father is present. In their reviews of this literature, however, Herzog and Sudia (1973) and Shinn (1978) note that various methodological problems plague these studies. These problems include: loosely defined terms, lack of control over socio-economic status (SES) and reasons for absence, and unrepresentative sampling.

The effects of father-absence on children's cognitive development are therefore still largely inconclusive.

One of the major difficulties with research on parental absence is lack of control over SES. This problem is by no means limited to studies of academic achievement and is a complex one to face. In fact, the problem of differentiating between the effects of father-absence and the effects of low income and differentiating between the consequences of low income and the consequences of race are as yet unsolved in the research (Herzog & Sudia, 1973).

There is abundant evidence that one-parent families and black families are, on the whole, less prosperous than two-parent families and white families....A rough three-way breakdown into low-, middle-, and high-income groups may fail to adequately control for SES [because] black and white female-headed families tend to cluster at the lower layers of each level (Herzog & Sudia, 1973, p. 157).

Occupation of the principal breadwinner is most often the measurement used in the establishment of SES. In dual-parent families this is usually the father's income whereas in father-absent families it is the mother's income. The problem of inadequate controls arises because as was mentioned earlier in this chapter there are economic inequities between the samples which make them incomparable (i.e., men often get paid more than women for the same job and the average income of a male head of household far exceeds that of the average female head of household putting them in different SES brackets).

In their review, Herzog and Sudia (1973) found no studies which were entirely successful in controlling for SES. They concluded that even if all variables including SES were adequately controlled, father-

absence per se would not show a significant relationship to low academic achievement. More recently, Feldman and Feldman (1975) reported no statistically significant differences between two groups on a number of variables including school performance and attitudes toward school. Their study of 880 school-aged children controlled for social class and matched father-absent with father-present samples.

Another methodological problem marking the literature on the relationship between father absence and poor academic achievement is that of loose or inconsistently defined terms. Herzog and Sudia (1973) found that in many studies, "intact home" was defined as one in which both biological parents were present. In other studies, stepparents were included in the 'intact' group.

A related problem is unaccounted for differences in types of "broken homes." Sometimes divorce is separated from death; other times it is combined with death as well as other types of paternal absence. Reasons for absence are oftentimes not controlled yet can have varying effects on a child. The psychological meaning for a child of a socially sanctioned absence such as military service and a socially disapproved absence like divorce or incarceration are vastly different. Yet the effects of these differences on academic achievement are still unexplained.

Similarly, variations in the availability of fathers exists not only in mother-headed but nuclear families as well. Herzog and Sudia (1973) and Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1979) point out that in both types of families a continuum exists in the availability of the father.

While a child who primarily lives with their mother may spend weekends with their father, a child who lives in a nuclear family might have little contact with their father due to frequent business trips, constituting direct or subtle neglect. Hetherington, et al. point out that the presence of the father seems not to be the critical variable but rather his participation as a good father. They indicate that children in nuclear families who spend little time with their fathers show decrements in their academic achievement.

In summary, reliance upon the findings of many of the studies on academic achievement is inhibited by ambiguity in the classification of father-absence and poor SES controls. However, those studies which do control for some of the critical variables suggest that children living with an interested father surrogate exhibit similar or superior cognitive performance to children living in other nuclear families and superior performance to those living in single-parent families (Lessing, Zagorin, & Nelson, 1970; Santrock, 1972; Solomon, Hirsch, Scheinfeld, & Jackson, 1972).

Psycho-social difficulties. Some of the most frequent generalizations made about children from single-parent families relate to social and/or psychological difficulties. In this study, these difficulties are defined as mental or emotional attributes which either indicate a lack of facility in relating constructively to other people or are in some way problematic to the healthy development of the child. This research will be reviewed in terms of the methodological problems which impede

the validity of such generalizations.

It is often concluded that children from single-parent families are prone to juvenile delinquency. Yet a number of problems lend a skepticism to the unequivocal acceptance of such research findings. Herzog and Sudia (1973) assert that while biases related to differences of race and SES and adequacy of control or comparison groups are as common to these studies as others about single parent families, the problem of differential treatment is glaring in studies of juvenile delinquency. They explain that for a number of reasons, findings which conclude that there is an overrepresentation of children from fatherless homes among juvenile delinquents should be examined cautiously. Many of these studies utilize police records or national statistics to determine which children engage in delinquent behavior. But investigators have found that children from single-parent families are more likely than others to be brought to trial and once charged, committed. These proceedings are also more likely to be recorded. Furthermore, policies for apprehending, committing and reporting juvenile delinquents vary depending on the offender's family's race and SES. For example, low-income black boys are more likely to be apprehended and committed than low-income white boys. And lower-income families (many of which are one-parent) are less influential in getting the courts to drop charges against their children. Statistics on juvenile arrests are also distorted by recidivism--the tendency for a child to repeat a criminal act.

Some studies go beyond frequency counts to attempt to find a causal relationship between familial or community variables and juvenile

delinquency. These studies, however, are marked by the unidimensional distortion mentioned earlier. One theory espouses a causation between family factors (such as lack of parental supervision, parental pathology, or family disharmony) and juvenile delinquency and has been criticized for an underemphasis on socio-economic and community factors. Another theory focuses on the association between juvenile delinquency and socio-economic factors to the exclusion of intrafamily factors. Either theory offers only a distorted view of what is really a complex interaction of variables. Reviews of the literature on the association between parent absence and juvenile delinquency conclude that it is much more likely that the interaction of depressed income and living conditions, stress and conflict within the home, and inadequate parental supervision contributes to delinquent behavior rather than a single factor per se (Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Marino & McCowan, 1976; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1979).

The generalization that children from one-parent families are prone to psychological maladjustment is largely unsupported in the literature. In a review of methodologically rigorous studies, Kadushin (1969) concluded that research findings do not support the proposition that "growing up in a single-parent home is clearly associated with increased psychic vulnerability and a higher rate of psychiatric and emotional disability" (p. 22). Some studies lack control or comparison groups which is particularly problematic when using clinical samples. Difficulty in estimating the bias or representativeness of these samples makes the findings generalizable only to the group studied

(Levitin, 1979). Many other studies which did have a non-patient control group simply failed to show a significant association between mental illness and a single-parent home (Herzog & Sudia, 1973). Clouding the research findings further are studies comparing children in different family structures on adjustment or developmental characteristics. Findings do not indicate that the single-parent family has adverse effects (Burchinal, 1964) and in some studies children from harmonious single-parent families fared better than their peers living in disharmonious 2-parent families (Nye, 1957; Raschke & Raschke, 1979). In addition to the problem of biased samples, family climate, income level and type of father absence are confounding factors making much of the findings ambiguous and conflicting.

Research findings emphasizing the need for an appropriate role model in the home for the development of an adequate sexual identity have major shortcomings. First, this literature is based on the assumption that children learn sex-typed behaviors by identifying with the parent of the same sex. Therefore, it is held, the absence of a father results in either increased 'feminized' behavior or in overly aggressive (reaction formation) behavior (Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Hetherington, et al., 1979; Longfellow, 1979). However, in their review of the research, Herzog and Sudia (1973) found contradictory findings and little support for this assumption. In fact, there is research to support the argument that it is the mother's functioning rather than the father's absence that plays a greater role in the development of sexual identity in children in mother-headed families (Hetherington, et al., 1978).

Burgess (1970) points out that "...overemphasis upon the importance of identification with the same-sex parent has created an omission of consideration of many other variables that operate within the socialization process" (p. 138). Although parents are important models of generalized sexual identity, there are many other socializing agents in a cultural setting. Role learning is a continuous and changing process throughout life and is impacted on by multiple facets of one's environment and relationships (siblings, friends, teachers, the media). Longfellow (1979) adds that uncertainty exists as to the significance of such differences in behaviors as boys from father-absent families being more likely to choose so-called feminine toys or games to play with than father-present boys.

A second shortcoming is that instruments employed to measure sexual identity reflect outmoded conceptions of feminine and masculine roles (Herzog & Sudia, 1973). Most of these scales assume a single continuum, from high masculine to high feminine, so that by scoring high masculine one automatically scores low feminine and vice versa. This presumes that the embodiment of the ideal man precludes such traits as gentleness, compassion, and sensitivity and the embodiment of the ideal woman precludes such traits as courage, strength, and aggressiveness. Not only are these scales less than functional in the sense that the ideal embodiment of woman and man could reasonably be believed to include shared qualities but also because the interpretation of the scores is ambiguous. Generally, a low masculine score for a boy is viewed as unfavorable. However, in reality a boy who displayed all the he-man qualities at the

high end of the masculine spectrum would probably be described as over-compensating as a result of lacking an adequate male role model. These scales leave recurring questions of are there differences between males and females and if so, what do these differences mean? (Herzog & Sudia, 1973).

Finally, many investigations into the effects of father-absence on sex-role identity are methodologically weak, lacking adequate control of the variables. Factors such as SES, sex of the child, sex of the absent parent, age at onset of absence, cause of absence and familial circumstances (such as presence of an older sibling or poorly adjusted parent) interact to create a variety of effects (Marino & McCowan, 1976).

To summarize, the methodological faults detailed in this section underscore the inconclusiveness of the literature on children from single-parent families. From this review, it seems that there is little reliable evidence to support the idea that living in a single-parent household causes psychological or academic problems. Reviews indicate that the functioning and interaction of family members in conjunction with economic and environmental factors may play a more crucial role in a child's academic and psychological development.

Teacher Expectation Literature

One important purpose of this study is to ascertain whether or not the idealized model of the family has affected teachers' expectations for children from single-parent families. To highlight the significance of determining teachers' expectations, this final section of the review

of the literature presents an overview of the expectation literature and describes two prominent studies which conclude that teachers' expectations affect their students' academic achievement and self-esteem. Since 1968 when Lenore Jacobson and Robert Rosenthal published Pygmalion in the Classroom, a spate of research studies have attempted to determine how and why teacher expectations affect student achievement, and the nature and formation of teacher expectations. Sloan (1977) summarizes the literature:

Irrespective of weaknesses in the original Jacobson-Rosenthal work and irrespective of the results of any other isolated study, work done by a large number of researchers over the past several years supports the findings that teachers do hold differential expectations regarding students' probability of achieving; these differential expectations can inappropriately affect the way the teachers interact with students; and the resulting pattern of teacher-student interaction can affect students' ultimate achievement (p. 15).

The overall content and controversy of this literature will not be reviewed here. This has been done extensively elsewhere (Finn, 1972; Kester & Letchworth, 1972; Brophy & Good, 1974). A schematic framework is presented however, to provide a credibility base to this abundant body of literature.

To organize the multitude of studies published in Pygmalion in the Classroom, Brophy and Good (1974) proposed the following schema:

- I. Studies Involving the Inducement of Expectation
 - A. Using product measures only
 - B. Using process measures only
 - C. Using both product and process measures
- II. Studies Involving Naturalistically Formed Expectations

- A. Using product measures only
- B. Using process measures only
- C. Using both product and process measures

The major distinction between studies is whether they examine expectations that are induced experimentally or formed naturally. In studies in which expectations were experimentally induced, typically the teacher was provided with some kind of false information which would lead them to believe that individual students were either more or less capable than their measured abilities indicated. "When students were the subjects of the experiment, expectations were usually induced by manipulating their success or failure on a task and/or by providing them with evaluative feedback suggesting that they had done well or poorly" (Brophy & Good, 1974). Jacobson and Rosenthal's "Intellectual Bloomer" study was of this type.

In contrast, naturalistic studies focus on normal experiences in the classroom. "With teachers, these [experiences] usually include first-hand interaction with students, I.Q. scores, examination of students' past achievement records, popular beliefs, myths or stereotypes, family resemblances, reports from other teachers, and tracking system labels" (Sloan, 1977, p. 22). Leacock and Rist's studies which are described later in this section are of this type.

There are limitations to both types of studies. Providing teachers with false information about students in experimentally induced studies raises ethical questions. Also, replication is difficult when it has not been ascertained whether or not the desired expectations were

successfully induced to begin with. While naturalistic studies do not have the problems inherent in inducing expectations, they do not lend themselves to the degree of experimental control possible in a laboratory. Despite this difficulty, most of the unequivocal evidence to support the existence of the teacher expectancy effect has been produced by naturalistic studies.

Within the distinctions of induced and naturalistic studies, Brophy and Good organize three subcategories--studies using only product measures, studies using only process measures, and studies using both product and process measures.

Product measures include I.Q. tests, achievement tests, sociometric popularity tests, measures of student personality traits or behavior, and other normative devices which measure the student on variables of interest and allow analyses of his progress on these variables during the course of the experiment in comparison with the progress of other students (Brophy & Good, 1974, p. 43).

Product measures concern only students' abilities or characteristics as measured before and after the experiment, whereas process measures involve the interactions of students and teachers for the duration of the experiment. When process measures are used to assess the expectancy effect, researchers look for predicted group differences in student-teacher interactions. Studies which engage both product and process measures have produced the most credible results.

This schema is useful in organizing the majority of research studies to date. For the purpose of providing a background relative to the present study's significance, studies which in particular demonstrate a high correlation between low teacher expectations and certain socio-

economic and racial characteristics of students will be discussed. Prominent in this group are studies done by Leacock (1969) and Rist (1970); others include Yee (1968), Mackler (1969), Tuckman and Bierman (1971), and Friedman and Friedman (1973). The first two of these studies will be reviewed here because of their particular relevance to the study of children from single-parent families--many of whom are black and/or have a low socio-economic status.

In a study done by Eleanor Burke Leacock in 1969, second and fifth-grade classrooms in four New York City schools were compared and contrasted according to socio-economic and racial criteria. The sample contained one lower-income black school, one lower-income white school, one middle-income black school, and one middle-income white school. The data obtained were based on classroom observation and student and teacher interviews. These were analyzed according to the nature and clarity of the teachers' teaching concept, variety of curriculum content, learning and thought styles encouraged, value content of materials, and relation of curriculum content to the children's experiences. Leacock found that the teachers in the low-income black school responded negatively to their students work twice as often as they responded positively. Also, the teachers in this school shared a derogatory attitude toward the children and their potentialities, denied much of what the children offered from their own experiences and disparaged and undermined the children's academic contributions.

In both classrooms the children were constantly receiving the message, 'You are not going to do very much.' The researchers were struck by the fact that standards in the low-income Negro

classrooms were low for both achievement and behavior (1969, p. 155).

In particular, Leacock's findings emphasize the differences in teachers' goal-setting statements for the different socio-economic status students. She explains that the teachers did not attempt to impose middle class goals on the low-income black children but rather imposed values which defined the children as inadequate and their proper role as one of deference. Their lowered expectations for the low-income children were expressed in a lower emphasis on goal-setting statements so that: "In a 3-hour period, clear-cut overt goal-setting statements numbered 12 and 13 for the low-income Negro school, 15 and 18 for the low-income white school and 43 and 46 for the middle-income white school" (Leacock, 1969, p. 205). Leacock points out that the low feedback pattern of the teachers in the low-income schools reflects and creates the expectations of defeat for the children in their classes. She suggests that low teacher expectations can lower the morale of both students and teachers.

The relationship of teachers' expectations of potential academic performance to students' social status and the self-fulfilling nature of lower teacher expectations has also been demonstrated by a longitudinal study done by Rist in 1970. Beginning at the kindergarten level, he observed black teachers and their black students. He observed that within the first eight days of school, the students had been placed in "ability" reading groups reflecting the teacher's expectation of success or failure to achieve. Interestingly, the teachers had no information related to the academic potential of any kindergarten child, only social

information about the child's family and home life. Rist maintains that the teachers' expectations for a child's success or failure were based on the subjective interpretation of these attributes and characteristics of the student. His observations led him to conclude that the teachers had an "ideal type" which consisted of characteristics they felt necessary for a child to succeed in school and society. Because the teachers' normative reference group was a mixed black-white, well-educated middle class, these characteristics included: ease of interaction among adults; high degree of verbalization in Standard American English; ability to become a leader; neat and clean appearance; belonging to a family that is educated, employed, living together, and interested in the child; and the ability to participate well as a member of a group.

Based on these traits, subjective evaluation was made by the teacher and the class was divided into groups expected either to succeed or to fail. Rist observed dissimilarities between these groups on a number of criteria. For one thing, students with the darkest skin and shabbiest clothes were placed in the "slow" group. Language was a differentiation among children. Those who were most verbal and used more standard English were placed in the "fast" group. Also, many more children who lived with both parents and had higher incomes were placed in the "fast" group.

Differential treatment was afforded the "fast learners" and the "slow learners." The "fast learners" received more of the teacher's attention, were assigned all positions of leadership and responsibility, were held up as examples to the rest of the class, and received more

reward-directed behavior. The "slow learners" were taught infrequently, subjected to more control-oriented behavior, and received little, if any, supportive behavior from the teacher. This same pattern was continued by the first and second grade teachers whose expectations were based, however, on a variety of informational sources related to the students' prior performance. Rist noted that teachers' lower expectations can cause students to respond with passive, indifferent, or disruptive behavior. In addition, he observed that the interactional pattern between the teacher and the various groups became increasingly rigidified over the course of the school year with a widening gap in the students' completion of academic material.

In summary, research has demonstrated that teachers' expectations can and do affect students' academic achievement and self-esteem. In particular, a high correlation between low teacher expectations and certain socio-economic and racial characteristics has been established. This sets a context in which the problem can be seen as a social as well as educational one, providing a background from which implications for children from one-parent households can be drawn.

Summary

This review of the literature chapter provides a framework through which the significance of examining teachers' expectations for children from single-parent families can be viewed. The first section of the chapter discussed some of the effects societal ideals about the roles and functions of families have on the changing forms and realities of

family life today, in particular the single-parent family. Then, research which, in part, informs these societal ideals was reviewed in terms of weaknesses making the literature unsupportive of generalizations resulting from these ideals. Finally, an overview of the expectation literature was presented highlighting the need to determine teachers' academic and psycho-social expectations for children from single-parent households.

C H A P T E R I I I

METHODOLOGY

Design

This investigation proposed to 1) determine if teachers hold more negative expectations for children from single-parent than dual-parent families, and 2) gather information concerning parents' perceptions of these same expectations. To accomplish this, a survey was conducted by the use of a questionnaire designed by the researcher. This instrument measured differences in teachers' expectations for children from one- and two-parent families in the areas of psycho-social difficulties and academic achievement. A related questionnaire was sent to parents to ascertain their perceptions of teachers' expectations on these same dimensions.

Hypotheses. Herzog and Sudia (1973) assert that children from single-parent families suffer from a "minority status" as the result of unfavorable stereotypes which are unsupported in the research. These stereotypes result, in part, from social mores which (as discussed in the Review of the Literature chapter) frown on divorce and cling to the notion of the nuclear family as the only environment viable for the healthy growth of a child. Also, research on children from single-parent families often predicated on these same assumptions, falsely concludes that these children are academic and behavioral problems. What

expectations then are teachers likely to hold for children from one-parent families? Some researchers, educators and single parents claim that teachers hold negative expectations for these children. This claim does not, however, have a strong empirical base. For this purpose, the following two hypotheses regarding teachers' expectations for children from single-parent families were developed for testing:

1. Teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families.

2. Teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families.

Single parents reports of discriminatory school practices run the gamut from verbal insensitivity to exclusion of positive representation of their family form in textbook and other classroom materials. The recent "Single Parents and the Public Schools Project" collected information regarding schools' policies and practices relevant to the needs of single parents and their children. Findings reveal that many single parents feel that the school assumes that any behavioral or academic problems their child might be having is related to being from a one-parent household. Accordingly, the following two hypotheses were developed for testing in the present study:

1. Single parents perceive that teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families.

2. Single-parents perceive that teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families.

Sample

Teachers. One hundred teachers (N=100) from a rural, Northeast, predominantly white, middle-class town comprise the teacher's sample. This represents 47 percent of the total teacher population for the district. Seventy-two percent of these teachers were teaching at the elementary level, 9 percent at the junior high level, and 19 percent were teaching at the senior high level. The following characteristics of the teacher sample appear in Table 1: sex, ethnicity, age, marital status, parental status, contact with children from single-parent families, income and political stand.

Parents. The potential parent population was identified from the same town's census data. These census data listed all residents over 17 years of age, their names, addresses, ages, and occupations. Two hundred and fifty persons were drawn using random number tables from 1031 persons identified as single, between the ages of 22-45 and maintaining separate households from their parents. It was assumed that persons with these characteristics were more likely to be single-parents with school-age children than persons who were younger or older and living with their parents. An additional 250 persons were drawn using random number tables from 2536 persons identified as married and between

TABLE 1
Teachers' Profiles
(N=100)

	n	%
<u>Sex</u>		
female	71	71
male	29	29
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
black	2	2
white	94	94
other	2	2
no response	2	2
<u>Age</u>		
21-29	14	14
30-39	43	43
40-49	19	19
50-59	22	22
60-69	2	2
<u>Marital Status</u>		
single	12	12
married, spouse present	78	78
married, spouse absent	1	1
divorced	5	5
widowed	2	2
remarried	2	2
<u>Parental Status</u>		
no	30	30
yes	69	69
no response	1	1
<u>Contact with Children From 1-Parent Families per Year</u>		
1-3	4	4
4-7	20	20
8-10	25	25
11 or more	38	38
no idea	12	12
no response	1	1

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

	n	%
<u>Income in 1979</u>		
less than \$10,000	1	1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	12	12
\$15,000 - \$24,999	46	46
\$25,000 - \$30,000	16	16
over \$30,000	19	19
no response	6	6
<u>Political Stand</u>		
conservative	24	24
middle-of-road	50	50
liberal	18	18
no response	8	8
<u>Grade Level Taught</u>		
elementary	72	72
junior high school	9	9
senior high school	19	19

22-45 years of age.

The actual parent population (N=102) was self-selected from the potential population. Of the original 500 persons mailed the questionnaire, 14 percent were returned as undeliverable, reducing the potential population to 429 persons. Although 33 percent of these persons completed and returned the questionnaire, only 24 percent were included in the sample. The other 9 percent were excluded because they either were not parents or they filled out the questionnaire incorrectly. Data were collected from 32 single parents and 70 married parents living with their spouses. These data were reported in one group called "parents," since crosstabulation analysis indicated no statistical significance between the groups. A breakdown of the following characteristics for the parent sample can be found in Table 2: sex, ethnicity, age, marital status, income, political stand and children in the school district.

The district in which the study was conducted was chosen for two reasons. First, the superintendent and principals were interested in and very supportive of the study. This was important since the researcher had met with opposition in other school districts. Secondly, the district's racial and socio-economic composition met with the researcher's criteria of avoiding the confounding effects of race and socio-economic status on the data. As Herzog and Sudia (1973) note in their review of the literature on father absence, "two conspicuously unsolved research problems are 1) differentiating between the effects of fatherlessness and the effects of depressed income and 2) differentiating between the consequences of poverty and the consequences of

TABLE 2
Parent Profiles
(N=102)

	n	%
<u>Sex</u>		
female	82	80
male	20	20
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
white	102	100
<u>Age</u>		
21-29	23	22
30-39	71	70
40-49	8	8
<u>Marital Status</u>		
single	2	2
married, spouse present	65	64
married, spouse absent	1	1
divorced	27	26
widowed	2	2
remarried	5	5
<u>Elementary Children in this District</u>		
no	38	37
yes	64	63
<u>Secondary Children in this District</u>		
no	74	73
yes	28	27
<u>Income</u>		
less than \$10,000	21	21
\$10,000 - \$14,999	21	21
\$15,000 - \$24,999	34	33
\$25,000 - \$30,000	9	9
over \$30,000	16	16
<u>Political Stand</u>		
conservative	23	23
middle-of-road	47	46
liberal	30	29
no response	2	2

color" (p. 158).

Instrumentation

Below is a format overview which in general terms describes the questionnaire. Later subsections discuss in more detail the initial development and rationale for inclusion of items; the pilot study and subsequent questionnaire revisions; and the procedures used for administering the instrument to teachers and parents.

Format overview. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) has two parts, one consisting of 20 paired comparison scale items and the other consisting of either 9 demographic questions for parents or 10 demographic questions for teachers. The first part consists of two subscales. One, the psycho-social subscale, consists of 13 items measuring expectations related to psycho-social attributes of children. The other, the academic subscale, consists of 7 items and measures expectations related to academic attributes of children. The teachers and parents received the same items; however, the parents were instructed to respond in the manner in which they felt a teacher would respond.

Because the researcher was interested in knowing if there are differences in teachers' expectations for children from single- and dual-parent families rather than what the intensity of those expectations might be, the paired comparison scale format was chosen. It was deemed the best method for obtaining this information. The comparisons were placed on a scale rather than in paired statements in an effort to

conceal the attitudinal bias the instrument was designed to measure.

The demographic section of the instrument contains 9 questions for parents and 10 questions for teachers. Information requested in this section refers to sex, ethnic identity, marital status, parental status, income and political leaning. In addition, teachers were asked to indicate whether or not their children (if they are a parent) live with them and their frequency of contact with children from single-parent families. Parents were additionally asked whether or not their children attend either the elementary, junior, or senior high school in their town.

Initial development. The questionnaire was developed in several stages. First, the social science and educational research literature was reviewed to identify any instruments which might be adapted in part or in whole to collect the desired data. No such appropriate instrument was located.

During the second stage, the researcher developed items and utilized them in a variety of formats. These were copied onto 8½ x 11 inch sheets of paper and distributed to a group of 15 doctoral students and 1 professor. Comments were elicited from the group about anything unclear or offensive, about which format concealed the bias the questionnaire was attempting to tap and about the general appeal of each format. Suggestions for revisions were also elicited. These 16 people served as informal evaluators of the instrument at this stage.

Subscale items. Two subscales were developed for the first section of the questionnaire. Items on the academic subscale are defined as

attributes which may directly impact on the accomplishment of learning. Items on the psycho-social subscale are defined as mental or emotional attributes which may impact on either the development of constructive relationships with other people or the healthy development of the individual child.

Items for these subscales were developed from three sources. One source was the review of the literature on children from single-parent families, of which three key articles were used. Herzog and Sudia's (1973) "Children in Fatherless Families," a comprehensive review and organization of the research on the effects of father-absence on children served as a model in devising the subscales. Their organization of the research into three main categories, "(1) overt behavior that is socially condemned (e.g., juvenile delinquency, extramarital pregnancy); (2) intellectual ability and achievement; (3) psychological and social adjustment not covered by (1) and (2)" (pp. 141-142) pointed out the general headings under which attributes of children from single-parent families discussed in the literature fall. In addition, Herzog and Sudia's article aided this author in pinpointing specific attributes such as: high academic achievement, positive attitude toward school, truant, high self-esteem, good verbal ability, psychosomatic illness, good analytical skills, defiant, and hostile.

Marino and McCowan's (1976) article, "The Effects of Parent Absence on Children" explores the dynamics of the one-parent home in reference to variable effects on academic achievement, sex-role development, intellectual development, and juvenile delinquency. Their discussion of

these areas again helped to pinpoint specific attributes to be used in this study (i.e., poor reading skills, confused sex-role identity, aggressiveness, passiveness, independent, cooperates with peers, low I.Q., and participates eagerly in activities).

Otto Weininger's (1972) article "Effects of Parental Deprivation: An Overview of Literature and Report on Some Current Research" discusses the literature on the behavioral effects of parental deprivation in early childhood. In one of the studies presented, psychologists were asked to rate children's symptoms according to whether they were "behavior directed outwards toward society" or "behavior directed inwards toward self." Many of the symptoms listed overlapped with attributes pinpointed from the other articles, thus validating their selection. In addition, attributes such as sexually precocious, overly fearful, withdrawn, steals, uses bad language, unhappy, and insecurity were identified and selected for use in the pilot questionnaire.

The other two sources from which the items for the subscales were developed were a small group of elementary school teachers and a small group of single parents. These teachers and parents were asked to generate statements they believe teachers would make about children from single-parent families as well as characteristics they feel are more descriptive of either children from one-parent or two-parent families. Again, there were many attributes overlapping with those selected from the literature. Additions chosen from these sources include: sociable, embarrassed about family, incomplete homework, adjusts to new situations easily, frequent expression of anger, short attention span, craves

attention, undisciplined, accepts other readily, creativity, good written expression, requests extra projects, relates well to adults, nervous, assumes leadership, and messy work.

These 40 attributes were divided into 4 groups: positive psycho-social, negative psycho-social, positive academic and negative academic. They were then ordered so that they were evenly dispersed in the scale thereby avoiding the possibility of the respondent falling into a negative or positive response set. Also, the attribute "craves attention" was placed first on the scale because it seemed to strike a responsive chord in people. It was felt that this might heighten respondents interest in completing the questionnaire. Appendix B contains this section of the pilot questionnaire.

Demographic items. The demographic section of the questionnaire contains nine/ten questions. The rationale for inclusion of each is described below.

In order to aid in determining the applicability of the study results to other populations, data were collected for the following demographic variables: age, sex, ethnic identity, and socio-economic status. These data were collected from both teachers and parents.

Data regarding teachers' marital status and parental status were collected in order to assess the degree to which teachers' personal experiences reflect those of single parents. It was deemed possible that teachers who are themselves single parents would be less likely to hold negative expectations for children from single-parent families than

those who have not had this experience. Data regarding parents' marital status and parental status were collected in order to distinguish the single parents from the married parents. It was presumed that single parents perceptions might differ from married parents as they might be more sensitive to the expectations teachers have for their children.

Data were collected from teachers on the amount of contact they have had with children from single-parent families in order to determine the amount of experiential data on which their attitudinal results are based. Speculation was made that perhaps there would be a difference in responses of teachers who indicated a good deal of contact with children from single-parent families and those who indicated little or no contact.

Since one aspect of a conservative political posture is often a respect for traditional values and practices, one could presume that teachers with conservative political leanings might be more likely to have negative expectations for children from non-traditional family structures. Informal evaluators of the instrument believed that results from "liberal" teachers would strongly differ from those of "conservative" teachers. They felt liberal teachers would not be biased against children from single-parent families because such a bias would be inconsonant with liberal values which support equality. This researcher, however, was not convinced that these teachers, despite their values, would be cognizant of their own biases. It was suspected, nonetheless, that the outcomes of this variable could have implications for subsequent training interventions. For these reasons, data regarding political leanings were collected from teachers. These data were also

collected from parents on the presumption that one's political stand might influence one's perceptions.

Pilot questionnaire. A final pilot questionnaire (see Appendix B) was developed consisting of 41 paired comparison scale items (26 on the psycho-social subscale and 15 on the academic subscale) and 9 demographic items. It was typeset and then photocopied onto three 8½ x 11 inch sheets of white bond paper, printed back-to-back, folded in half horizontally and stapled in the center to create a booklet. The front cover contained a graphic illustration, a title, and the researcher's organizational affiliation. This format was chosen based on Dillman's research and contention that "the professional appearance achieved by the booklet format, the carefully designed cover pages and the quality printing job tells the respondent that a great deal of work went into the questionnaire" (1978, p. 121). This, of course, will enhance the importance of the survey in their eyes and hopefully, result in a higher response rate.

Pilot study. A pilot study was conducted with 29 teachers from 2 white, middle class, rural towns. Characteristics of sex, ethnicity, age, marital status, parental status, income, political stand, and frequency of contact with children from single-parent families for the pilot population appear in Table 3. These demographics were obtained to ensure the similarity of the pilot population with the study's teacher population.

In one of the towns, teachers received the questionnaire through school mail along with a cover letter requesting their assistance

TABLE 3
Pilot Profiles
(N=29)

	n	%
<u>Sex</u>		
female	15	52
male	14	48
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
black	1	3
white	27	93
other	1	3
<u>Age</u>		
21-29	9	31
30-39	8	28
40-49	10	34
50-59	2	7
<u>Marital Status</u>		
single	2	7
married, spouse present	26	90
married, spouse absent	1	3
divorced	0	0
widowed	0	0
remarried	0	0
<u>Parental Status</u>		
no	9	31
yes	20	69
<u>Frequency of Contact with Children</u>		
<u>From Single-Parent Families</u>		
1-3	1	3
4-7	3	10
8-10	4	14
11 or more	20	69
no idea	1	3
<u>Income</u>		
less than \$10,000	1	3
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2	7
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11	38
\$25,000 - \$30,000	6	21
over \$30,000	6	21
no response	3	10

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

	n	%
<u>Political Stand</u>		
conservative	7	24
middle-of-road	10	34
liberal	9	31
no response	3	10

(see Appendix B). Those who completed the questionnaire and returned it were included in the pilot sample. Assistance from the other teachers was solicited face-to-face and those who agreed, completed and returned the questionnaire were included in the pilot sample. Both groups were asked to fill out the questionnaire and make any criticisms or suggestions they might have regarding the content and/or the format.

Pilot data were analyzed using frequency distributions. The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for the entire instrument and each subscale. Item-by-item and item-by-scale correlations were computed.

The content validity of the instrument was assessed by the administration of a questionnaire to six professionals. This questionnaire (see Appendix C) consisted of three sections. The first section asked the raters how appropriate for inclusion in this survey they felt each attribute was on the pilot questionnaire. The second section had two parts. Part A asked the rater how well they felt each attribute listed represented the psycho-social subscale as defined in this study. Part B asked the raters how well they felt each attribute listed represented the academic subscale as defined in this study. The final section asked general questions about the format and design of the instrument as well as for any suggestions for improvement of the questionnaire.

The six raters were chosen on the basis of their areas of professional expertise. Two family researchers were chosen on the basis of their expertise in research design and methodology and their familiarity with the family literature. Two psychotherapists whose practices

include both single- and dual-parent families were chosen on the basis of their familiarity with children and adults of both lifestyles. Two teacher trainers were selected on the basis of their experiences of working with both pre- and in-service teachers and children and their insights into teachers' concerns and attitudes.

All raters received the validity questionnaire in the mail along with a cover letter (see Appendix C); a pilot questionnaire and a stamped, addressed, return envelope.

Questionnaire revisions. The questionnaire was revised based on comments and suggestions made by the pilot sample and the validity raters and statistical analysis of the pilot data. Frequency distribution analysis indicated which attributes had a high degree of discrimination, that is, many respondents answering in one direction. In addition, those items which showed a high degree of correlation ($>.6$) with most other items on the scale were ascertained from analysis using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Alpha = $>.8$ was the level set for retention of the items. The 20 items which together indicated Alpha = $>.8$ were then retained for the final subscales.

This reduced the number of items from 41 on 3 pages to 20 on 2 pages--a desirable factor since the shorter the questionnaire, the more likely the potential population would be to take the time to respond. Based on some teachers' and raters' comments that the pilot title made them cautious, the title of the questionnaire was changed to be more vague. The booklet and printing formats were kept the same as they

received very favorable comments.

Procedure. With endorsement from the district superintendent and individual school principals, elementary teachers were asked in staff meetings to participate in the study by filling out a questionnaire. A very brief explanation of the study was given, anonymity was assured and a copy of the results was offered in appreciation for participation. The junior high and high school principals agreed to distribute the questionnaire, a cover letter (see Appendix A) and their own letter of endorsement through the teachers' mailboxes. This method was chosen as an alternative to waiting another month for their next staff meeting.

Two mailings were made to the potential parent population. The first mailing contained: 1) a cover letter (see Appendix A) which explained the purpose of the study, emphasized the importance of the respondent to the study's success, offered gratitude for participation and guaranteed anonymity; 2) a number-coded questionnaire (see Appendix A); and 3) a postage paid, addressed return envelope.

A number of procedures designed to increase the response rate should be noted here. Blumberg, Fuller and Hare (1974) and Simon (1978) indicate that a high response rate depends on a combination of as many desirable qualities as possible. To that end, as suggested by the literature, the cover letters were each hand-signed by the author and the outgoing and return envelopes were all stamped with commemoratives. Unfortunately, the cover letter neglected to mention how the respondents name had been located. It is suspected that mention of this fact might

have increased the response rate.

Another device employed as part of the "package" to increase response rate was a follow-up postcard (see Appendix A). The front side of the postcard contained the potential respondents' name and address, a reduced version of the questionnaire's graphic cover (excluding the title), and a metered stamp. The back side of the postcard reminded those who had not yet returned the questionnaire to please do so and thanked those who already had. It was also hand signed by the author. One week after the initial mailing, this postcard was mailed to all 500 persons in the potential parent population.

Analysis

Parents and teachers responses on returned questionnaires were coded and keypunched onto IBM cards and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data obtained from the survey, though ordinal in nature, were considered to be interval data throughout the statistical treatment. Computations were made based on a five-point scale where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 3 = as likely as;
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from two-parent families;
- 5 = much more likely in children from two-parent families.

This was done so that means, standard deviations, and medians could be utilized to make the presentation of the data more understandable.

Frequency distributions were computed for all variables for both the parent data and the teacher data. Statistics reported with this procedure include percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations. It should be noted that frequencies reported in the discussion of the results are based on collapsed data--that is, where "much more likely" and "somewhat more likely" are treated as one category, "more likely."

Crosstabulations were computed to examine the relationships between each demographic variable and each item on the subscales for both the parent sample and the teacher sample. Chi squares, degrees of freedom, and levels of significance were reported and utilized with this procedure. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < .15$ to flag items that might be significant in future research. These items were closely examined and only those having a meaningful significance in the context of this study and past research were reported.

The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Item-by-scale correlations were computed for the entire instrument and each subscale.

Summary

A survey was conducted to address the problem discussed in Chapter I and test 4 hypotheses related to teachers' academic and behavioral expectations for children from single-parent families. It was hypothesized that teachers expect children from single-parent families to exhibit more psycho-social difficulties and lower academic achievement than their dual-parented peers. Also, it was hypothesized that

parents' would have these same perceptions of teachers' expectations. A questionnaire was developed to test the hypotheses.

Chapter III described the overall design and implementation of the study. This description included the sampling procedures used, development, piloting and final implementation of the instrument and treatment of the data. Chapter IV will present the results of the survey.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter reports the findings of the research. It is divided into three sections. First, it summarizes the reliability findings. Next, the hypotheses are reiterated and statistics related to each are discussed and presented in tables. The third section reports significant crosstabulation information, including tables. A summary concludes the chapter.

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Item-by-scale correlations were computed to determine how well items relate to one another within each subscale and on the entire instrument. The total 202 cases were included in the computations. For the entire instrument Alpha = .89. The Alpha for the psycho-social subscale = .84 and on the academic subscale = .82. These statistics reflect an acceptable degree of reliability.

Hypotheses

Based on Herzog and Sudia's (1973) assertion that children from single-parent families suffer from a "minority status" as the result of unfavorable stereotypes unsupported in the research, two hypotheses

regarding teachers' expectations were developed and tested. Two other hypotheses were developed based on single parents' reports of discriminatory school practices. These latter hypotheses dealt with parents' perceptions of teachers' expectations.

Computation. Two sets of means are reported in the results. The overall means for each subscale were computed where for negative items:

- 1 = much more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 3 = as likely as;
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from two-parent families;
- 5 = much more likely in children from two-parent families.

For positive items the numbers were reversed, where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from two-parent families;
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from two-parent families;
- 3 = as likely as;
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 5 = much more likely in children from single-parent families.

Therefore, for example, a mean of 1.4 would indicate that teachers expect that children from single-parent families are much more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties or lower academic achievement and a mean of 4.6 would indicate that teachers expect children from two-parent families are much more likely to exhibit either psycho-social difficulties or lower academic achievement.

Means for individual items on each subscale were computed where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from single-parent families;
- 3 = as likely as;
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from two-parent families;
- 5 = much more likely in children from two-parent families.

So, for example, if a mean of 4.0 is reported on a positive attribute, it indicates that teachers expect it is somewhat more likely to be found in children from two-parent families. If a mean of 2.0 is reported on this same item, it indicates that teachers expect it is more likely to be found in children from single-parent families. This same principle applies to negative attributes.

Hypothesis I: Teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families.

Results of the survey confirm this hypothesis. (A comparison of means, medians, and standard deviations for teachers and parents overall responses to items on the subscales can be found in Table 4.) On the psycho-social subscale, the mean = 2.2 (standard deviation = .231) indicating that overall, teachers do expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families. Frequencies of teachers' responses to variables on this subscale appear in Table 5. Means, medians and standard deviations are presented in Table 6. Responses to a number of variables are noteworthy. When the categories of "much more likely" and "somewhat more likely" were collapsed, 82 percent of the teachers responded more likely in children from one-parent families, 17 percent

TABLE 4
Means (m) and Standard Deviations (s.d.)
for Overall Responses to Items on the Subscales^a

	m	s.d.
<u>Teachers</u>		
psycho-social	2.2	.231
academic	2.4	.229
<u>Parents</u>		
psycho-social	2.1	.213
academic	2.5	.123

^aThese means and standard deviations are computed where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 3 = as likely as
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families
- 5 = much more likely in children from 2-parent families

TABLE 5
Frequencies of Teachers' Responses
to Items on the Subscales
(N=100)

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
<u>Psycho-Social Subscale</u>					
craves attention	42	40	17	1	0
accepts others readily	0	7	42	29	21
insecurity	39	47	14	0	0
undisciplined	31	48	19	2	0
truant	32	43	21	3	1
cooperates with peers	1	2	50	35	12
embarrassed about family	13	48	37	2	1
confused sex-role identity	7	45	46	1	1
high self-esteem	0	4	33	42	19
frequent expression of anger	14	50	36	0	0
unhappy	12	49	39	0	0
defiant	15	54	29	2	0
overly fearful	11	54	35	0	0
<u>Academic Subscale</u>					
high motivation to achieve	0	2	37	32	29
creativity	3	5	66	14	9
poor reading skills	9	38	50	1	1
incomplete homework	7	50	40	1	0
high academic achievement	0	3	31	39	26
positive attitude toward school	0	3	36	42	19
good written expression	0	2	63	25	10

^aMML-1 (much more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^bSML-1 (somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^cALA (as likely as)

^dSML-2 (somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^eMML-2 (much more likely in children from 2-parent families)

TABLE 6

Means (m), Medians (M) and Standard Deviations (s.d.)
for Teachers' Responses to Individual Items on the Subscales^a

	m	M	s.d.
<u>Psycho-Social Subscale</u>			
craves attention	1.77	1.70	.76
accepts others readily	3.64	3.51	.89
insecurity	1.75	1.73	.68
undisciplined	1.92	1.89	.76
truant	1.98	1.91	.86
cooperates with peers	3.55	3.44	.77
embarrassed about family	2.28	2.27	.71
confused sex-role identity	2.44	2.45	.68
high self-esteem	3.77	3.78	.80
frequent expression-of anger	2.22	2.22	.67
unhappy	2.27	2.27	.66
defiant	2.18	2.14	.78
overly fearful	2.24	2.22	.63
<u>Academic Subscale</u>			
high motivation to achieve	3.88	3.84	.85
creativity	3.21	3.14	.80
poor reading skills	2.46	2.55	.71
incomplete homework	2.35	2.34	.63
high academic achievement	3.88	3.89	.83
positive attitude toward school	3.77	3.76	.79
good written expression	3.43	3.26	.70

^aThese m, M and s.d. are computed where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 3 = as likely as
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families
- 5 = much more likely in children from 2-parent families

responded "as likely as" and 1 percent responded more likely in children from two-parent families on the variable craves attention. Likewise, 86 percent expected that insecurity is more likely to be found in children from one-parent families, whereas only 14 percent thought this attribute as likely to be found in one as in the other. No one expected that insecurity was more likely to be found in children from two-parent families.

More than three-quarters (79%) of the teachers expected that children from single-parent families are more likely to be undisciplined. Nineteen percent responded that this attribute was as likely to be found in children of either type of family, with two percent expecting children from two-parent families more likely to be undisciplined.

Three-quarters (seventy-five percent) of the teachers responded that children from single-parent families are more likely to be truant whereas twenty-one percent expect this attribute is as likely to be found in one as in the other. Only 4 percent expect that children from two-parent families are more likely to be truant.

When asked about the attribute defiant, 69 percent expected it more likely to be exhibited by children from single-parent families. Twenty-nine percent felt it was as likely to be exhibited by children from one type of family as the other and two percent expected it was more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families.

Although the frequency of responses is not quite as strong for the following variables as those previously discussed, there is a clear trend confirming the hypothesis. For example, 35 percent of the

teachers expected that children from single-parent families are as likely to be overly fearful as children from two-parent families. However, 65 percent responded that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit this characteristic while 0 percent felt it more likely to be found in children from two-parent families.

While 36 percent of the teachers expected frequent expression of anger as likely to be found in children from single-parent as two-parent families, 64 percent believed this attribute was more likely to be found in children from single-parent families. None indicated that frequent expression of anger was more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families.

In response to the attribute embarrassed about family, while 37 percent responded "as likely as," 61 percent expected it to be more characteristic of children from single-parent families. Three percent expected it to be more characteristic of children from two-parent families.

Sixty-one percent of the teachers responded that children from single-parent families are more likely to be unhappy. Thirty-nine percent believe this attribute is as likely to be found in children from one type of family as the other and none expected that children from two-parent families were more likely to be unhappy.

The respondents were slightly more divided on the attribute confused sex-role identity. While 52 percent expected this attribute to be more likely found in children from one-parent families, 46 percent felt it is as likely to be found in one as the other. Only 2 percent

expected children from two-parent families to exhibit confused sex-role identity.

Interestingly, respondents were also more divided on the attributes with a positive connotation. However, these attributes are generally expected to be more likely found in children from two-parent families rather than children from single-parent families. This finding contributes to the confirmation of the hypothesis. For example, although 42 percent of the teachers responded "as likely as" to the attribute accepts others readily, 50 percent expected that this attribute was more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families. Seven percent felt that children from single-parent families are more likely to accept others readily.

In response to cooperates with peers, 50 percent believed this attribute is as likely to be found in children from one-parent as two-parent families. Forty-seven percent expected this attribute is more likely to be characteristic of children from two-parent families while 3 percent felt it is more likely to be characteristic of children from one-parent families.

Teachers responses to the attribute high self-esteem indicated a stronger trend. While one-third (33%) responded "as likely as," 61 percent felt that high self-esteem is more characteristic of children from two-parent families. Four percent responded that high self-esteem is more likely to be found in children from single-parent families.

No comparisons between expectations of single-parent teachers and married teachers could be drawn. The single-parent teacher sample was

too small (N=2).

For the sake of easier comparison, Hypothesis III will be discussed next.

Hypothesis III: Parents perceive that teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families.

Parents responses to items on this subscale indicated that they perceive teachers as expecting children from single-parent families to be more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two-parent families. With a mean score of 2.1 (standard deviation = .213), results confirm this hypothesis. Frequencies of parents' responses to items on the psycho-social subscale appear in Table 7. Means, medians, and standard deviations are presented in Table 8.

Overall, parents responses to all items were highly correlated to those of teachers. A comparison of Tables 7 and 8 illustrates this finding. A look at the relative percentages of parents' responses (Table 9) substantiates the interpretation that parents perceive teachers as having a negative bias toward children from single-parent families. A high percentage of parents pinpoint several attributes as contributing factors: truant (68%), defiant (67%) and unhappy (69%). An even greater percentage flag numerous other attributes which they perceive teachers believe are more characteristic of children from single-parent families. These are: insecurity (88%), craves attention (82%), embarrassed about family (77%), undisciplined (75%), confused sex-role identity (74%), overly fearful (74%), and frequent expression of anger (69%).

TABLE 7
Frequencies of Parents' Responses
to Items on the Subscales
(N=102)

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
<u>Psycho-Social Subscale</u>					
craves attention	37	47	15	2	1
accepts others readily	3	9	37	39	14
insecurity	41	49	10	2	0
undisciplined	29	47	22	4	0
truant	24	45	32	1	0
cooperates with peers	2	4	44	43	8
embarrassed about family	39	40	19	4	0
confused sex-role identity	26	49	24	3	0
high self-esteem	2	4	30	41	25
frequent expression of anger	21	49	30	2	0
unhappy	24	46	31	1	0
defiant	27	41	31	2	1
overly fearful	27	48	27	0	0
<u>Academic Subscale</u>					
high motivation to achieve	2	6	44	31	19
creativity	2	7	64	19	10
poor reading skills	9	23	68	1	0
incomplete homework	10	42	47	1	1
high academic achievement	1	1	51	31	18
positive attitude toward school	1	3	49	37	12
good written expression	0	5	58	32	7

^aMML-1 (much more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^bSML-1 (somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^cALA (as likely as)

^dSML-2 (somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^eMML-2 (much more likely in children from 2-parent families)

TABLE 8

Means (m), Medians (M), and Standard Deviations (s.d.)
for Parents' Responses to Individual Items on the Subscales^a

	m	M	s.d.
<u>Psycho-Social Subscale</u>			
craves attention	1.85	1.79	.81
accepts others readily	3.51	3.55	.91
insecurity	1.73	1.70	.71
undisciplined	2.01	1.96	.81
truant	2.09	2.10	.76
cooperates with peers	3.50	3.51	.78
embarrassed about family	1.88	1.80	.84
confused sex-role identity	2.03	2.01	.78
high self-esteem	3.81	3.86	.92
frequent expression of anger	2.12	2.11	.75
unhappy	2.08	2.08	.75
defiant	2.10	2.08	.85
overly fearful	2.00	2.00	.73
<u>Academic Subscale</u>			
high motivation to achieve	3.57	3.47	.92
creativity	3.27	3.15	.81
poor reading skills	2.60	2.77	.66
incomplete homework	2.41	2.46	.72
high academic achievement	3.62	3.46	.82
positive attitude toward school	3.54	3.45	.77
good written expression	3.40	3.29	.69

^aThese m, M and s.d. are computed where:

- 1 = much more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 2 = somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families
- 3 = as likely as
- 4 = somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families
- 5 = much more likely in children from 2-parent families

TABLE 9
Relative Percentages of Parents' Responses
to Items on the Subscales

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
<u>Psycho-Social Subscale</u>					
craves attention	36.3	46.1	14.7	2.0	1.0
accepts others readily	2.9	8.8	36.3	38.2	13.7
insecurity	40.2	48.0	9.8	2.0	0
undisciplined	28.4	46.1	21.6	3.9	0
truant	23.5	44.1	31.4	1.0	0
cooperates with peers	2.0	3.9	43.1	42.6	7.9
embarrassed about family	38.2	39.2	18.6	3.9	0
confused sex-role identity	25.5	48.0	23.5	2.9	0
high self-esteem	2.0	3.9	29.4	40.2	24.5
frequent expression of anger	20.6	48.0	29.4	2.0	0
unhappy	23.5	45.1	30.4	1.0	0
defiant	26.5	40.2	30.4	2.0	1.0
overly fearful	26.5	47.1	26.5	0	0
<u>Academic Subscale</u>					
high motivation to achieve	2.0	5.9	43.1	30.4	18.6
creativity	2.0	6.9	62.7	18.6	9.8
poor reading skills	8.8	22.5	66.7	1.0	1.0
incomplete homework	9.8	41.2	46.1	1.0	1.0
high academic achievement	1.0	1.0	50.0	30.4	17.6
positive attitude toward school	1.0	2.9	48.0	36.3	11.8
good written expression	0	4.9	56.9	31.4	6.9

^aMML-1 (much more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^bSML-1 (somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^cALA (as likely as)

^dSML-2 (somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^eMML-2 (much more likely in children from 2-parent families)

Although a high percentage of parents indicated cooperates with peers (50%) and accepts others readily (52%) as attributes teachers believe are more characteristic of children from two-parent families, an even higher percentage (65%) had the same perception for the attribute high self-esteem. In contrast, only 6 percent marked cooperates with peers as reflective of teachers' beliefs about children from single-parent families. Eleven percent likewise noted accepts others readily and 6 percent likewise noted high self-esteem.

There is a very close alliance between parents' and teachers' responses to most items on this subscale. The greatest differential exists between responses to the items confused sex-role identity and embarrassed about family. Whereas 74 percent of the parents perceived teachers as expecting children from single-parent families to exhibit confused sex-role identity, only 52 percent of the teachers actually did. Again, while 77 percent of the parents discerned teachers as believing children from single-parent families as more likely to be embarrassed about their families, 61 percent actually did.

Overall, parents perceptions of teachers' attitudes are quite accurate. However, they did perceive teachers to have slightly more negative attitudes toward psycho-social variables of children from single-parent families than the teachers' data about themselves indicates.

Hypothesis II: Teachers expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families.

Results of the survey confirm this hypothesis. On the academic subscale

the mean score was 2.4 (standard deviation = .229) indicating that overall teachers do expect that children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit lower academic achievement than children from two-parent families. Table 5 presents frequencies of teachers' responses to variables on this subscale.

Although in general the results on this subscale were not as strong as on the psycho-social subscale, they do indicate a definite bias. Collapsing "much more likely" and "somewhat more likely," 65 percent of the teachers expected that high academic achievement is more likely to be demonstrated by children from two-parent families. Thirty-one percent feel this attribute is as likely to be demonstrated in children from one-parent as two-parent families, while 3 percent expect it is more likely to be demonstrated in children from single-parent families. Likewise, 61 percent expected that a positive attitude toward school is more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families. Thirty-one percent of these teachers responded "as likely as" and 3 percent responded "more likely in children from single-parent families.

The attribute high motivation to achieve received similar responses. Sixty-one percent of the teachers expected a high motivation to achieve to be exhibited by children from two-parent families while only 2 percent felt it is more likely to be exhibited by children from single-parent families. Thirty-seven percent felt it is as likely in one as in the other.

Respondents are slightly more divided on their responses to the

variables having negative connotations on the academic subscale. Poor reading skills were more likely expected to be found in children from single-parent families by 50 percent of the teachers while 47 percent felt it is as likely to be found in children from single-parent families as children from two-parent families. Two percent expected that children from two-parent families are more likely to exhibit poor reading skills. More than half (57%) the respondents felt that incomplete homework is more characteristic of children from one-parent families. Forty percent felt it is as likely to be characteristic of children from one type of family as the other and 1 percent believed that incomplete homework is more characteristic of children from two-parent families.

Responses to two variables on the academic subscale represent a less negative position. On the variable good written expression 63 percent of the teachers believed it is as likely to be demonstrated by children from one-parent as two-parent families whereas 35 percent expected this attribute to be more characteristic of children from two-parent families. Two percent felt that good written expression is more characteristic of children from single-parent families. Creativity elicited a slightly wider range of responses. Sixty-six percent of the teachers believed that creativity is as likely to be an attribute of children from one-parent families as children from two-parent families. Twenty-three percent expected it is more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families while eight percent expected it is more likely to be exhibited by children from one-parent families.

Results confirm the hypothesis that teachers expect that children

from single-parent families are more likely to be lower academic achievers. Sixty-five percent of the teachers expected that high academic achievement is more likely to be demonstrated by children from two-parent families. Interestingly, though, only 35 percent expected good written expression to be more characteristic of these children and even fewer (23%) expected children from two-parent families to be more likely to exhibit creativity.

Hypothesis IV: Parents perceive that teachers expect children from single-parent families to be lower academic achievers than children from two-parent families.

Parents' responses to items on the academic subscale verify that they do perceive teachers as expecting children from single-parent families to be lower academic achievers. A mean score of 2.5 (standard deviation = .123) contributes to the confirmation of the hypothesis. Frequencies of parents' responses to items on the academic subscale are presented in Table 7.

The relative percentages of parents' responses supports the interpretation that teachers do expect children from single-parent families to be lower academic achievers. A substantial percentage of parents discerned that teachers expect children from two-parent families to be more likely to display these attributes: high motivation to achieve (49%), high academic achievement (48%) and a positive attitude toward school (48%). Fifty-one percent perceive teachers as expecting incomplete homework to be more characteristic of children from single-parent families.

For several items on the academic subscale, parents suggest that

teachers have a more neutral attitude. They perceive that teachers believe creativity (63%), poor reading skills (67%), and good written expression (57%) are as likely to be demonstrated by children from single-parent as dual-parent families.

Although in general parents' responses to items on this subscale are closely allied with teachers', two items are notable. Forty-seven percent of the teachers expected that poor reading skills are more characteristic of children from single-parent families while this was the perception of only 31 percent of the parents. Also, 64 percent of the teachers believed that high academic achievement is more likely to be demonstrated by children from dual-parent families whereas only 48 percent of the parents perceived this attitude.

Crosstabulations

Crosstabulations were computed to examine relationships between the demographic variables and items on the subscales. The level of significance was set at $p < .15$ to flag items that might be significant. However, closer scrutiny of a number of items at this level revealed that cells were too small to indicate a true significance. These items therefore were not reported.

Most outstanding for the teachers' data are the numbers of items which correlate with political stand. As predicted, conservative teachers (N=24) do hold moderately more negative expectations for children from single-parent families than liberal teachers (N=18). Half (N=50) of the teachers described themselves as "middle-of-the-road."

Table 10 illustrates this trend for the crosstabulation of political stand by high motivation to achieve. On a scale from conservative to liberal, fewer conservative teachers (29%) than liberal teachers (50%) expected that a high motivation to achieve is as likely to be characteristic of children from one-parent as two-parent families. Also, 71 percent of the conservative teachers in contrast to 39 percent of the liberal teachers expected this attribute to be more likely exhibited by children from two-parent families. This is significant at the .07 level ($\chi^2 = 11.4$ with 6 degrees of freedom).

Responses to the attribute high self-esteem continue in the same vein. Thirteen percent of the conservative teachers in contrast to fifty-six percent of the liberal teachers expected that this attribute is as likely to be found in children from one-parent as two-parent families. Likewise, 83 percent of the conservatives compared to 33 percent of the liberals expected high self-esteem to be more characteristic of children from two-parent families. The $\chi^2 = 13.5$ with 6 degrees of freedom and a significance of .03. Table 10 presents these statistics. This trend is also evident on the attributes positive attitude toward school ($\chi^2 = 12.5$ with 6 degrees of freedom and a significance of .05) and high academic achievement ($\chi^2 = 12.0$ with 6 degrees of freedom and a significance of .06).

Similarly, on the scale conservative to liberal, almost 3 times (N = 22; 91%) as many conservative teachers as liberal teachers (N = 6; 33%) expected the attribute truant (see Table 10) to be more characteristic of children from single-parent families. Equally illuminating is

TABLE 10
Teachers' Cross-Tabulations by Count and Row Percentage
(N=100)

Political Stand by High Motivation to Achieve

	SML-1 ^a	ALA ^b	SML-2 ^c	MML-2 ^d
Conservative	0	7 29.2	8 33.3	9 37.5
Middle-of-Road	0	21 42.0	14 28.0	15 30.0
Liberal	2 11.1	9 50.0	4 22.2	3 16.7

² = 11.4; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .07

Political Stand by High Self-Esteem

	SML-1 ^a	ALA ^b	SML-2 ^c	MML-2 ^d
Conservative	1 4.3	3 13.0	11 47.8	8 34.8
Middle-of-Road	1 2.0	19 38.0	21 42.0	9 18.0
Liberal	2 11.1	10 55.6	5 27.8	1 5.6

² = 13.5; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .03

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)
Political Stand by Positive Attitude Toward School

	SML-1 ^a	ALA ^b	SML-2 ^c	MML-2 ^d
Conservative	0	4 16.7	11 45.8	9 37.5
Middle-of-Road	1 2.0	19 38.0	22 44.0	8 16.0
Liberal	1 5.6	10 55.8	6 33.3	1 5.6

² = 12.5; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .05

Political Stand by High Academic Achievement

	SML-1 ^a	ALA ^b	SML-2 ^c	MML-2 ^d
Conservative	0	4 17.4	10 43.5	9 39.1
Middle-of-Road	1 2.0	13 26.0	21 42.0	15 30.0
Liberal	2 11.1	9 50.0	5 27.8	2 11.1

² = 12.0; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .06

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Political Stand by Truant

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
Conservative	11 45.8	11 45.8	0	1 4.2	1 4.2
Middle-of-Road	17 34.0	23 46.0	9 18.0	1 2.0	0
Liberal	2 11.1	4 22.2	11 61.1	1 5.6	0

$\chi^2 = 27.6$; 8 degrees of freedom; sig. = .0005

Political Stand by Undisciplined

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d
Conservative	10 41.7	12 50.0	1 4.2	1 4.2
Middle-of-Road	15 30.0	24 48.0	11 22.0	0
Liberal	1 5.6	10 55.6	6 33.3	1 5.6

$\chi^2 = 12.2$; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .05

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Political Stand by Incomplete Homework

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d
Conservative	2 8.7	18 78.3	3 13.0	0
Middle-of-Road	5 10.2	24 49.0	20 40.8	0
Liberal	0	6 33.3	11 61.1	1 5.6

$\chi^2 = 16.4$; 6 degrees of freedom; sig. = .01

Political Stand by Insecurity

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c
Conservative	11 45.8	11 45.8	2 8.3
Middle-of-Road	23 46.0	23 46.0	4 8.0
Liberal	1 5.6	11 61.1	6 33.3

$\chi^2 = 13.9$; 4 degrees of freedom; sig. = .007

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Political Stand by Frequent Expression of Anger

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c
Conservative	3 12.5	18 75.0	3 12.5
Middle-of-Road	9 18.0	20 40.0	21 42.0
Liberal	2 11.1	7 38.9	9 50.0

$\chi^2 = 10.2$; 4 degrees of freedom; sig. = .04

Political Stand by Overly Fearful

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c
Conservative	4 16.7	16 66.7	4 16.7
Middle-of-Road	5 10.0	27 54.0	18 36.0
Liberal	0	8 44.4	10 55.6

$\chi^2 = 8.4$; 4 degrees of freedom; sig. = .07

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Sex by Creativity

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
Female	1 1.5	3 4.4	51 75.0	5 7.4	8 11.8
Male	2 6.9	2 6.9	15 51.7	9 31.0	1 3.4

$\chi^2 = 13.2$; 4 degrees of freedom; sig. = .01

Sex by Cooperation with Peers

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
Female	1 1.4	2 2.8	40 56.3	18 25.4	10 14.1
Male	0	0	10 34.5	17 58.6	2 6.9

$\chi^2 = 10.5$; 4 degrees of freedom; sig. = .03

^aMML-1 (much more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^bSML-1 (somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^cALA (as likely as)

^dSML-2 (somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^eMML-2 (much more likely in children from 2-parent families)

the contrast between 0 percent of the conservative teachers and 61 percent of the liberal teachers believing that truancy is as likely to be exhibited by children from single-parent families as children from two-parent families. This is significant at the .0005 level ($\chi^2 = 27.6$ with 8 degrees of freedom). Conservative teachers attitudes are consistently more negative toward children from single-parent families on several other attributes. Children from single-parent families are viewed as more likely to be undisciplined by 92 percent of the conservative teachers compared to 61 percent of the liberal teachers (see Table 10). This trend is also evident in the presentation of the statistics for the crosstabulation of the variable political stand by the attributes incomplete homework, insecurity, frequent expression of anger, and overly fearful (see Table 10).

Crosstabulations of items by amount of contact with children from single-parent families do not indicate any significant differences in attitudes. It is interesting to note, however, that only 12 percent of the teachers had no idea as to the approximate number of children from one-parent families they have contact with during their average teaching year. Sixty-three percent revealed that they had contact with approximately 8 or more of these children. These statistics reflect both the growing numbers of children from single-parent families as well as teachers' awareness of who these children are in their classroom.

Table 10 also presents the unexpected differences between males and females in response to two items. Half (N=15; 52%) of the male teachers expected creativity is as likely to be demonstrated by children

from one-parent families as two-parent families. In contrast, three-quarters (N=51; 75%) of the females had the same expectations. Likewise, whereas (N=19; 66%) of the males believed cooperation with peers more likely to be exhibited by children from two-parent families only (N=28; 39%) of the females held this same belief.

Crosstabulations of the parent data showed that only marital status was a significant variable. On 4 items, more divorced parents perceived a stronger negative expectation toward children from single-parent families on the part of teachers than did married parents living with their spouses. As can be seen from Table 11, while 14 percent of the married parents discerned teachers as believing that children from single-parent families are much more likely to be overly fearful, 41 percent of the single parents had this perception. This trend is also significant for the crosstabulation of marital status by the attributes truant, defiant, and embarrassed about family also shown in Table 11.

Summary

This chapter presented frequencies of teachers and parent responses to items on the psycho-social and academic subscales. Comparison of these statistics reveal a high degree of correlation between teachers' expectations and parents' perceptions of these expectations. All 4 hypotheses were confirmed although results on the academic subscale were not as strong as those on the psycho-social subscale.

Significant ($p < .15$) crosstabulation findings were also reported. Political stand was the most significant variable in the teachers' data

TABLE 11
Parents' Cross-Tabulations by Count and Row Percentage
(N=102)

Marital Status by Overly Fearful

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c
Single	1 50.0	1 50.0	0
Married, SP ^f	9 13.8	37 56.9	19 29.2
Married, SA ^g	1 100.0	0	0
Divorced	11 40.7	9 33.3	7 25.9
Widowed	0	1 50.0	1 50.0
Remarried	5 100.0	0	0

² = 27.1; 10 degrees of freedom; sig. = .002

Marital Status by Truant

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d
Single	0	2 100.0	0	0
Married, SP ^f	9 13.8	36 55.4	20 30.8	0
Married, SA ^g	0	0	1 100.0	0
Divorced	12 44.4	5 18.5	9 33.3	1 3.7
Widowed	0	0	2 100.0	0
Remarried	3 60.0	2 40.0	0	0

² = 29.8; 15 degrees of freedom; sig. = .01

TABLE 11 (CONTINUED)
Marital Status by Defiant

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d	MML-2 ^e
Single	2 100.0	0	0	0	0
Married, SP ^f	11 16.9	27 41.5	26 40.0	1 1.5	0
Married, SA ^g	0	1 100.0	0	0	0
Divorced	9 33.3	13 48.1	3 11.1	1 3.7	1 3.7
Widowed	0	0	2 100.0	0	0
Remarried	5 100.0	0	0	0	0

² = 37.1; 20 degrees of freedom; sig. = .01

Marital Status by Embarrassed about Family

	MML-1 ^a	SML-1 ^b	ALA ^c	SML-2 ^d
Single	0	2 100.0	0	0
Married, SP ^f	22 33.8	31 47.7	9 13.8	3 4.6
Married, SA ^g	0	1 100.0	0	0
Divorced	12 44.4	5 18.5	9 33.3	1 3.7
Widowed	0	1 50.0	1 50.0	0
Remarried	5 100.0	0	0	0

² = 23.4; 15 degrees of freedom; sig. = .07

TABLE 11 (CONTINUED)

^aMML-1 (much more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^bSML-1 (somewhat more likely in children from 1-parent families)

^cALA (as likely as)

^dSML-2 (somewhat more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^eMML-2 (much more likely in children from 2-parent families)

^fSP (Spouse present)

^gSA (Spouse absent)

correlating with a number of subscale items. Crosstabulation analysis of the parent data indicated that only marital status was a significant variable. Further discussion and implications of these data will be presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter opens with an interpretation of the results of the study and then follows with a discussion of implications drawn from these results. Recommendations arising from the implications are presented next. The chapter closes with some conclusions.

Discussion of the Results

The problem giving rise to this study can be envisioned as a kind of 'feedback loop.' Existing societal mores about families generally underlie research questions which in turn inform individual attitudes which at some point become collective, merging and impacting on societal mores. The following figure illustrates this point.

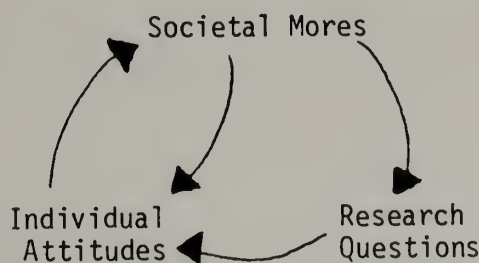


Fig. 1. Feedback loop.

Explication of American social mores about the family is contained in Chapter II. Notions related to the traditional nuclear family with a

breadwinning husband, homemaking wife, and their 2 children as the ideal are explained. How these notions form the underpinnings and shape the outcomes of the research on children from single-parent families is also presented there. Because, to date, much of the research on children from single-parent families is still inconclusive, further study is needed to determine whether attitudes are based on reality or mythology. The present investigation, therefore, represents only one piece in a set of studies. It intervenes at the individual level--choosing teachers to represent a microcosm of the collective attitudes in our society toward children from single-parent families. Although results of the present study are not conclusive as to the reality or non-reality basis of teachers' negative expectations, they are supportive of differences in teachers' perceptions being informed by their individual values and attitudes.

Teachers' data. To determine what these expectations are, the researcher designed a questionnaire to measure teachers' psycho-social and academic expectations for children from one- and two-parent families. One hundred teachers were asked to respond to 13 psycho-social attributes and 7 academic attributes. They were to check on a scale the degree to which they expected each attribute was more likely to be exhibited by either children from single-parent or two-parent families or whether the attribute was as likely to be exhibited by one as the other. The investigation was undertaken in a white, middle-class area to eliminate the possible confounding effects of race and class on the

data. Frequency distributions and crosstabulations were computed on the data. The results are striking.

Negative expectations for children from single-parent families characterizes many teachers' responses. On the 20 items, a high percentage of teachers' responses indicated a negative bias on 18 items toward children from single-parent families. Over 60 percent of the teachers indicated that they expect children from single-parent families to possess these psycho-social attributes: craves attention, insecurity, undisciplined, truant, defiant, overly fearful, frequent expression of anger, embarrassed about family, and unhappy. Although noteworthy, a lower percentage of teachers (52%) expected children from single-parent families to exhibit confused sex-role identity.

Positive attributes seem to draw a more divided response and are expected primarily of children from two-parent families. These traits are: high self-esteem, cooperates with peers, and accepts other readily. While a greater percentage of teachers expect these attributes to be more characteristic of children from two-parent families, a modest percentage believe they are as likely to be found in children from one-parent families. Thus, these results begin to suggest that among the teacher population there is some divergent opinion at least about the presence of positive attributes among children from both single- and two-parent families.

Lower academic expectations for children from single-parent families are suggested by teachers' responses on the academic subscale. While the results are not as strong here, they do indicate a negative

bias. Three positive attributes--high motivation to achieve, positive attitude toward school, and high academic achievement--are believed to be traits of children from two-parent families by a sizable percentage (over 60%) of the teachers in the sample.

Interestingly, while many teachers believed a number of the positive academic items were more characteristic of children from two-parent families, they were more divided on the negative items. An almost equal number of teachers attribute poor reading skills and incomplete homework to children from single-parent families as those who believed these traits are as likely to be found in children from one type of family as the other. Perhaps this is an indication that teachers' expectations are based more on generalizations than specific experiences with individual children from single-parent households. It is easier to make sweeping statements about groups of people (like "children from two-parent families have a positive attitude toward school") than specific remarks (like "children from single-parent families have poor reading skills") which are more inclined to make one think about individual cases.

Another interesting result is that a sizable percentage (again over 60%) of the teachers said creativity and good written expression are as likely in children from two-parent families as one-parent families. The author can only speculate that creativity (under whose rubric good written expression may fall) is not necessarily viewed as healthy, given social myths about alcoholic playwrights, drug abusing musicians, and self-destructive artists. It is also possible that creativity is thought

to be an innate ability rather than one that is influenced by either home or school environment. Or, perhaps teachers aren't as completely biased against children from single-parent families as their responses to the psycho-social items would suggest.

Summarizing these data, it seems that more teachers expect children from single-parent families to have trouble with psycho-social development than academic achievement. However, the moderate percentage of teachers who seem to have more negative academic expectations for children from single-parent families are noteworthy and perhaps intervention-worthy.

Teachers' free-form comments at the end of the questionnaire are enlightening and seem to represent the range of existing attitudes. (A transcript of these comments can be located in Appendix D). One teacher (802) remarked that better results could probably be had in a ghetto area. This reflects an attitude of "we don't have any kids like that here" and the stereotype of children from single-parent families as poor and not well-taken care of. This teacher's remark perhaps substantiates the view that children from single-parent families are often in "double jeopardy." Since a consequence of single-parenthood is often a decline in family income, children from single-parent households may suffer not only discrimination based on their family status but also their socio-economic status.

Another teacher (874) relayed a story about a comparison she made between two of her classes. In a "middle-phased" class of 20 students, 14 were from single-parent households whereas in an "upper-phased" class,

all but 2 students lived in two-parent households. This report, I suspect, was offered as verification that children from single-parent families are lower academic achievers. This is the same kind of illogical causality that epitomizes much of the literature. According to prevailing assumptions, if these children are in lower-phased classes, it must be because they live with one parent. This typifies the kind of reasoning that does not consider multiple causes and/or that these other causes may be unrelated to being single-parented (e.g., sibling rivalry or death of a grandparent). It also overlooks consequences on student achievement of negative biases from teachers.

The other part of the picture is portrayed by a teacher (878) who says:

The more I read and hear that 'problems always arise in one-parent families' the more I'm beginning to question that statement--My classroom experience seems to indicate that there are many one-parent situations that seem to be doing okay--and many two-parent situations that have problems--I think a one-parent home may be the cause of some problems, but it is not the obvious conclusion--some of these homes have beautiful kids coming from them.

This teacher seems to have an awareness that there may be other factors mediating low academic achievement and/or behavioral problems. Perhaps she recognizes and accepts a variety of lifestyles. "As likely as" responses to items on the questionnaire reflect this teacher's comment. A reading of the completed questionnaires showed that a small percentage of teachers did check "as likely as" on most of the items. So, a modest percentage of "as likely as" responses came from the same people. This type of response shows that the teacher takes a multiple perspective.

S/he recognizes that one variable (namely single-parenting) does not necessarily cause one outcome (namely poor academic achievement).

Clearly different is the type of response in which the teacher checked "more likely in children from single-parent families" on many or all of the negative items. The first 2 comments cited above depict the response of this type of teacher. S/he has preconceived expectations of a child based on their single-parent status and concludes causation between the two.

The free-form comments by teachers support this interpretation of the data. While a majority of the teachers had negative expectations for children from single-parent families, there were some whose responses reflected a more equitable attitude. This group of teachers is noteworthy as they could provide a support base as well as valuable assistance in implementation of interventions in the schools.

In sum, teachers' responses contrasted with the researcher's prior belief that teachers might be sensitive to the bias the instrument was attempting to measure. It was thought that teachers might respond in what they believed to be a 'socially desirable' manner. Quite evidently, the worry that teachers would not allow their biases to show was needless. In retrospect, it seems apparent that to believe single-parent families are more conducive to creating psycho-social difficulties and lower academic achievement is socially acceptable. Consequently, there was no reason for teachers to mask their expectations.

At this point, some comments should be made about the demographic results. For one, the teachers in the sample are aware that they have

contact with children from single-parent families. A reading of teachers' comments indicates that to some extent their responses were based on a generalizing of their experiences with children from single-parent families. Teachers' responses also seem to be shaped by their own values (as reported in political stand). What this means is that children from single-parent families may not be any more likely to be lower academic achievers or behavior problems but that teachers' perceptions are skewed by their own values and attitudes.

Differences in the expectations of teachers at various grade levels were not statistically significant. It has been remarked that junior high and high school teachers are not likely to know who their single-parented students are. This may be so but the teachers' expectations can still be transmitted to these students in indirect ways. Expectations can be generally conveyed by the values implicit in language and curriculum content, for example.

It was anticipated that teachers who were themselves single parents might be less likely to hold negative expectations for children from one-parent families than those who have not had this experience. It was impossible to check differences in expectations since only 2 percent of the teacher sample were single parents. This might, however, prove to be a fruitful area for further research.

It was also presumed that conservative teachers might have more negative expectations for children from single-parent families than their liberal colleagues. This prediction was confirmed for half the attributes on the questionnaire. Chi square analysis indicated that a

significantly higher percentage ($p < .07$) of conservative teachers expected these positive attributes to be more characteristic of children from two-parent families: high motivation to achieve, high self-esteem, positive attitude toward school, and high academic achievement. Likewise, a significantly higher percentage ($p < .07$) of conservative teachers indicated these negative attitudes as more characteristic of children from one-parent families: truant, undisciplined, incomplete homework, insecurity, frequent expression of anger, and overly fearful. Teachers who described themselves as "middle-of-the-road" were somewhat divided on their responses with a higher percentage responding closer to the conservative teachers than the liberal teachers.

These statistics confirm the suggestion that the respect for traditional values and practices implicit in a conservative political stance negatively impact on the expectations held for children who are part of a non-traditional family. They also raise questions about and shed light on how to do training with conservative teachers. Is it possible to raise consciousness and diminish negative expectations while maintaining conservative values? Yes, because the goal of such an intervention is not to ask teachers to change their values but rather understand why it may be unhelpful to pass judgment on those whose values may differ. When placed in the context of fairness ("all children deserve good and equal treatment") teachers can all agree and make efforts toward this end.

However, quite clearly from the results, there are some teachers with more equitable expectations. These teachers are a potentially

valuable resource for rallying support and commitment from conservative teachers for such a training program.

Parents' data. Concern over the social desirability response set affecting the data led to the administration of the instrument to 102 parents (32 single parents, 70 married parents) in order to determine their perceptions of teachers' expectations. Results suggest that parents' perceptions are remarkably accurate. A high percentage of parents predicted that teachers would expect negative attributes of children from single-parent families and positive attributes of children from two-parent families. Overall, this was true. There was, however, some slight discrepancy between teachers own reported expectations and parents' perceptions of these. Interestingly, on the academic subscale parents generally perceive teachers' attitudes to be slightly less negative toward children from single-parent families than teachers own responses indicate. This is in contrast to responses on the psycho-social subscale on which parents perceive teachers as having a slightly more negative attitude toward children from single-parent families than teachers' data indicates about themselves. This is perhaps because the development of academic skills is usually seen as the teachers' responsibility whereas psycho-social development is viewed as the parents' domain. These results possibly reflect parents' perceptions that teachers would expect the family to be more crucial to the development of psycho-social difficulties. Similarly, parents might expect that teachers see themselves rather than the family as playing a larger role

in the development of a child's academic skills.

Far more parents than teachers commented at the end of the questionnaire. This may have been because parents received that questionnaire in the mail and could respond to it at their leisure. Time was limited, however, for teachers since most of them were administered the instrument at a staff meeting at the end of a school day.

Open-ended comments of parents, both single and married, indicated such qualities of home life as happiness and security, not family structure, as the most important element contributing to a child's adjustment.

Almost all of the single parents who chose to make additional comments said they believed teachers do have biased attitudes toward children living in single-parent households. Their comments are informative and are recommended to the reader (see Appendix D). Some single-parents' comments summed up all others in addition to making noteworthy suggestions:

I do not feel that teachers think or act autonomously from the total school system, which embodies the expectations (assumptions) that children come from two-parent homes, and that this is the ideal arrangement. My child came home with a notice for a father/son picnic and activity day--from a school that has a large number of single-parent children who live with mothers. There is an assumption that the very presence of two parents automatically insures a better home environment/models, etc. This can not be justified, given the incidence of divorce, abuse, battered women, and unhappy marital arrangements; nor can it be justified given male socialization which often makes the father no more than an authoritarian figurehead. What is at issue is good parenting, not who is or is not present. It is my belief that good parenting can and does occur in single-parent homes. Also, many homes are continuous, extending from single-parent to include the households of parents, children or friends in the shared parenting process. The total school

environment, including books, activities, etc. should be re-evaluated in light of this perspective (358).

Another single parent corroborates this perspective:

I feel it is very important to educate incoming teachers about classism, sexism, racism, and heterosexism, as well as being able to really see each student as an individual. Today many people are prejudiced against anyone who is different from them. Teaching an openness to differences would be helpful... (378)

A non-custodial parent expressed his frustration at being excluded from his child's education by teachers and administrators:

Teachers, as well as administrators, appear to be unaware of the single-parents' influence upon the development of a child. Especially the absent parent! Communication with the absent parent is nearly non-existent. However, the absent parent continues to influence the child through learning experiences, love, and continued attention to education, but his involvement with teachers and administrators is negligible, at best. Teachers that pre-judge child development according to that child's parental environment should go back to school (481).

These comments seem to represent the growing number of single-parents who are unwilling to accept the verdict that their children are destined to be failures. Parents are challenging the schools to take some responsibility for changing this mandate. They are asking to be recognized as healthy-family-environment-providers who, like dual parents, want their children to be respected in their own right and not judged by societal or teacher preconceptions.

According to parents' demographic data, almost all of the parents in the sample have children attending the schools in which the teachers in the sample are employed. So that while a parents' perceptions may not be based on their experience of a particular teacher in this sample, it is informed by their perceptions of the norms in that school district.

Another of the researcher's predictions did prove statistically significant on a few of the items. Chi square analysis indicated that on 4 of the psycho-social attributes (overly fearful, truant, defiant, and embarrassed about family), there was a significant difference between the responses of single parents and married parents. Single parents perceived a stronger negative teacher attitude on these variables than did married parents. Some speculation can be made about why there were differences on these particular 4 items. Perhaps responses to these attributes represent single-parents' fears about what is happening or could happen to their children. In fact, if parenting alone, single parents may have reason to feel more helpless if their children are truant or defiant. And given prevailing social mores about divorce and barriers inhibiting the use of "regular" language (e.g., husband, spouse) while talking about non-traditional relationships in variant families, it is understandable why single parents may either feel embarrassed about their family situation or fear that their children are embarrassed. These speculations serve as an important point of departure when considering single parents' feelings as an area for further research. Questions related to single parents' own feelings and societal views about their family structure, as well as the impact these may have on single-parented children, are certainly worthy of further investigation. Such information could be useful in the development of parent and teacher education programs aimed at decreasing stereotypes and increasing positive feelings about a supportive home-life regardless of the number of parents present.

On the whole, however, the differences in perceptions of married and single parents were not significant. At first glance, these data might be attributed to projection on the part of all parents. That is, parents expect teachers to think the way parents themselves think-- a general reflection of society's attitudes toward children from single-parent families. A look at parent's comments (see Appendix D) however, leads to the conclusion that both single and married parents responses are at least in some cases, based on experiences with teachers in the schools.

The preceding section provides an interpretation of the results of the study. Findings indicate that a high percentage of teachers in the sample do hold negative expectations for children from single-parent families, although more so on psycho-social variables than academic variables. A conservative political stance typifies many of these teachers whereas a small group of liberal teachers seem to have a more tolerant view. Generally, parents' accurately perceive teachers expectations for children from single-parent families, it seems from these results. However, parents do perceive a more negative attitude on the psycho-social subscale than teachers' results indicate and a slightly less negative attitude on the academic subscale than the teachers' results indicate. Comments made by single parents in particular, address the nature of teachers' biases against children from single-parent families. The following sections will discuss the implications of the results, make some recommendations for further research and draw conclusions.

Implications

The overriding implication of this study is that the American educational system could be faced with the challenge of unlocking yet another inhibitor to equal educational opportunity. As discussed in Chapter II, teachers expectations for a child's academic achievement and self-esteem have clearly been shown to impact on those same factors. Rist's (1970) study demonstrates that long range educational deprivation results because teachers' expectations regarding the academic potential of a child are based almost entirely on social class and such related facts about the child and their family. Earlier in this chapter a teacher's story about having many more single-parented students in a "middle-phased" class than in an "upper-phased" class was mentioned. This story is reminiscent of Rist's findings that children who conformed to the teacher's 'ideal' (i.e., light-skinned, middle class, living with two parents, etc.) were placed in "faster" groups while children who did not conform (i.e., dark-skinned, lower-class, living with one parent, etc.) were placed in the "slower" group. Results of the present investigation suggest that the larger number of children from single-parent households in this teacher's middle-phased class may be due to the same kind of self-fulfilling prophecy that Rist found in his investigation. If teachers expect truancy, defiance, and low motivation, they may just find it (or help create it by their differential responding). That is not to say that other factors are not involved, but rather that teachers' expectations are a contributing factor.

Findings of the present study suggest that teachers do hold more

negative expectations for children from single-parent families, especially on psycho-social variables. These findings have implications for the research on children from single-parent families. As was noted in Chapter II, in many such studies, information about children was obtained from trait rating scales filled out by teachers. The validity of this method has been challenged on the grounds that such ratings may reflect the implicit theory of the rater and their subjective perceptions of the child's behavior. Findings of the present study which suggest that teachers do hold negative expectations for children from single-parent families support this criticism. Research based on the subjective observations of teachers can hardly be said to be unbiased and the results can hardly be claimed as conclusive.

Teachers' responses can be thought of as a microcosm of the attitudes toward single-parented children in society at large. If so, then the instrument in this study could be used to measure academic and psycho-social expectations of any group of people in this society for children from single-parent families. The dynamics of expectations operate in all interpersonal relationships and contexts. Given the number of children living in single-parent households, we would all do well to be more cognizant of the effect our expectations have on others. For example, school psychologists, family counselors, and other mental health practitioners could assess their expectations and reflect on their practices in relation to the problems, needs, and aspirations of their single-parented clients. Applications could be made to a variety of systems which touch on the lives of children (e.g., the media, the

medical establishment or the social service system). However, for the purposes of this study, recommendations will be limited to educational settings.

Recommendations

First, since the results of this investigation are only generalizable to similar Northeast, rural, white, middle-class populations, replications are recommended with other populations. Use of the instrument with a sample of black and white teachers who work with urban black children, for example, might provide valuable comparative data. Thus, expectations based on another reference group could be assessed. Also, the expectations of black and white teachers could be compared. Special attention would need to be given to the interaction of class and race with perceptions of single-parentness.

The present instrument simply measures expectations for a general class of children, those who are single-parented. Adaptation of the instrument to measure more subtle differences in expectations for the many subgroups contained in single-parent families could prove to be useful. For example, are expectations and/or treatment different for children whose parents are single for socially approved reasons (e.g., death or military service) and children whose parents are single for socially disapproved reasons (e.g., divorce, or imprisonment). Likewise, are there differences in expectations for or attitudes toward children who live solely with a father in contrast to a mother?

A replication of the present study to include a larger sample of

single-parent teachers might prove a fruitful area of investigation. A comparison of expectations of single-parent teachers with expectations of teachers who have not had this experience might show some differences and might help in determining the actuality of differential student behavior which may also be influencing teacher assessments. These data could then be used as the foundation for the formation of teacher support groups around single-parent issues. A common frustration of teachers is not having the structured time to 'really talk' to their colleagues. Dialogue between these two groups of teachers could provide all with useful insights and encourage collaborative strategies for equalizing treatment of students. Given the effects of teacher expectations, these insights might have a positive effect on their students too.

A logical outgrowth of these expectation findings would be the development of an observation instrument which would measure the operationalization of these expectations. Simply put, now that we know that most teachers report having different expectations for children from one- and two-parent families, in what ways are these expectations conveyed? Information contained in Rosenthal's (1973) summary of the discriminatory behaviors that mediate the expectancy effect in conjunction with the present questionnaire could lay a solid groundwork for the creation of this kind of observation instrument. Rosenthal found the following aspects of the teacher-student relationship to be behavioral conveyors of expectations: amount of smiling, touching and eye contact; amount of time allowed for students' responses to a question; type of

feedback and questions asked by the teacher; and how much the teacher talks to whom. Obviously, if a teacher pays little attention to a student, makes discouraging remarks to him/her and/or avoids physical contact with him/her, the student is going to pick up a negative message. As a result, the child will feel less welcome, less motivated, learn less and have a lower self-image. On the other hand, if a teacher establishes a warm relationship with a student, encouraging him/her and giving her/him attention, the child will be more productive and feel good about themselves (Hughes, 1973; Leacock, 1969; Rist, 1970). An instrument designed to assess teachers' behaviors in relation to children from single-parent households could consider some of these questions:

--To whom and how many times does the teacher give praise or encouragement?

--To whom and how many times does the teacher make punitive or discouraging remarks?

--Is the teacher's reaction congruent with the child's behavior? (e.g., if the child seems sad one day, does the teacher send the child to see the school counselor?)

--Does the teacher's use of language reflect negatively on non-traditional family structures (e.g., does the teacher use expressions like "broken home"?)?

--With whom does the teacher engage in independence or dependence-fostering behaviors (e.g., does the teacher show some children how to cut out paper snowflakes while actually cutting them out for other children?)?

This type of observation instrument could serve two purposes. For one, descriptive feedback received through use of the instrument could aid teachers in assessing their classroom behaviors. Often, inappropriate teacher behaviors are unintentional, due more to a lack of awareness and lack of knowledge of appropriate strategies than anything else (Brophy and Goode, 1974). Descriptive information about classroom behavior raises teachers' awareness and provides them with specific guidelines for change.

Concurrently, an observer (or team) using the instrument could collect data on student behavior. Much of the information existing thus far on single-parented children's school behavior has come from teacher reports, unmindful of the possible expectancy effect. Notation of students' individual actions and reactions to and interactions with the teacher simultaneously with the teachers' behavior could provide valuable insight into the self-perpetuating nature of the expectancy effect. Observers might be able to begin to disentangle single-parented children's behavior independent of teachers' expectations for their behavior and also determine the extent of prejudicial treatment on the part of teachers.

Another intervention could be aimed at developing skills which convey positive expectations. Sloan (1977) developed a successful training program designed to negate the effects of negative expectations by increasing teachers' behaviors which convey positive expectations to students. Teachers were trained to increase the frequency and distribution of 4 specific teacher behaviors: smiling, wait-time, thought-provoking

questions, and substantive interactions. This training familiarizes teachers with the nature and effects of expectations and those particular behaviors which can either facilitate or debilitate a child's achievement. An effective training program such as this could be the foundation on which the more specific behaviors related to negative expectations for children from any type of family could be overlaid. The development of skills in conveying positive expectations with both pre- and in-service teachers could be a powerful approach to increased academic achievement and enhanced self-esteem for all children.

Looking at the problem more globally as a complex interaction of people, policies, and practices, a school-wide intervention could be an exciting (and certainly challenging) event. Presuming the entire school community had agreed to work together on the elimination of negative stereotypes, an encompassing design could be formulated. A number of efforts such as those that follow, would need to be orchestrated to create a modified system.

For one, the "expectation" training mentioned earlier could be facilitated with administrators and teachers. Teachers would benefit in understanding the effects of their expectations on students and administrators would benefit by developing an awareness of how their expectations of teachers and students contribute to the self-perpetuating cycle of inappropriate expectations.

Another part of such a systemic intervention would involve training with students. A critical dynamic feeding into this expectancy cycle is students' susceptibility to and internalization of teachers' low

expectations. The teacher has low expectations for the student, the student comes to have low expectations for him/herself and acts accordingly. These behaviors in turn reinforce the teacher's low expectations. An approach with students would involve helping them determine and live up to their own self-standards and resist dependence on the expectations of others. This strategy would not only be power enabling for students in relation to teachers but peers as well. The development of self-worth would be reinforced by a curriculum which values a diversity of people and lifestyles and discourages negative stereotyping.

Given the current variance in family structures (e.g., single-parents, remarried, extended, non-kinship) initiation of discussion between parents, teachers, and administrators to generate mutual needs would be a giant systemic step toward the creation of satisfactory policy changes. Together, these school and community members could establish criteria for evaluating textbooks and curriculum content for bias, create new policies for parent-teacher conferences, and promote norms which are inclusionary, accepting, and affirming and discourage rejection or negation of individuals based on misconceptions. Bringing together parents, staff, and administrators to adopt a mutually agreed upon plan of action would create a unique matrix of support. The involvement of these adults in such actions would lend itself to a school climate conducive to the positive academic and psycho-social development of all children. In addition, this support system would serve as an empowering force for school and community members in policy negotiations with the central administration.

A hierarchy of possible interventions ranging from simple to complex has been suggested above. This hierarchy is based on economic and multi-factor feasibility. In addition to conveying a vision and a direction for approaching the problem, these suggested interventions once again indicate the depth of the problem and its existence in a broader context than just schools.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether teachers hold negative expectations for children from single-parent families. Results support this hypothesis. Teachers' responses indicate that they have lower academic expectations and even more negative expectations on the psycho-social dimension for children from single-parent families. This study does not, however, provide conclusive information about the roots of these expectations, i.e., whether they are embedded in reality or mythology.

Reported differences in response by teachers with different political views supports the notion that teachers' perceptions of students are informed by their own values. Children from single-parent families may or may not be lower academic achievers or behavior problems but a teachers' perceptions of these children are skewed by their own beliefs. Further observational work needs to be done, therefore, to determine whether children from single-parent families do actually achieve or behave differently than children from two-parent families independent of teachers' expectations for their behavior. In addition, observational

assessment needs to be done to ascertain whether teachers do treat children from single-parent families differently.

Negative expectations can have ill consequences for children. An argument is made that expectations may be rooted in and perpetuated by social mores. These social mores, which narrowly define the traditional nuclear family or the ideal, impact on all systems in our society and inform individual attitudes. If this cycle is to be broken or reconstructed to generate more encompassing ideals, interventions must take place on several levels.

The rapid changes taking place in society hasten the need for a new multi-faceted perspective on the part of teachers. Research by Feldman and Feldman (1975), Raschke and Raschke (1979) and others support the contention that the single-parent family is as effective as the dual-parent family in promoting academic achievement and healthy psychological development. It is essential that teachers recognize the reality of diverse family structures and can see them as viable. The accomplishment of good teaching is contingent on the ability to impart knowledge in a meaningful, unbiased manner and provide support and encouragement for all students. Interventions on an individual level, that is, working with teachers to help them clarify their expectations is one beginning step in providing this quality and supportive education.

On the local level, community members and school administrators need to help create opportunities for exploration of ways to deliver quality and equal service to all children. On the broader social level,

public policymakers must aim for educating the public to a respect for and understanding of family diversity. In addition, they must adopt policies which support the integrity of a multitude of lifestyles.

In conclusion, this study was an important preliminary investigation into a complex problem. Teacher expectations are only one in a spectrum of related single-parent and educational issues which are crucial to address. Hopefully, the results and recommendations of this study will inspire others to make meaningful contributions to this growing field.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers' and Parents' Questionnaires
Accompanying Letters
Follow-up Postcard



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts
Amherst 01003

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
 354 Hills South

Dear Teacher:

Never before have we been so concerned about families: our own, our friends', our students' families. Due to a rising divorce rate and other social factors, many children now live in single parent families. Yet there is still much we need to know about these children.

Teachers are a significant force in children's lives. Knowing how they feel about children is information especially relevant to teachers, counselors and administrators as it may help them make decisions about teacher training, curriculum and school policies which effect the lives of children.

You are one of a small number of teachers who are being asked to express their feelings about attributes of children from one and two parent families. Approval for your school's participation in this study has been granted by both Mr. and Mr. . The information collected will be held strictly confidential and will be reported without your name or any other identifying factors.

Your responses to the questions are valuable. If you would like to receive a summary of the results, print your name and address on the back of the envelope. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elinor R. Levine".

Elinor R. Levine
 Director, Explorations Teacher Education Program

ERL/re

FAMILY LIFESTYLES PROJECT



Explorations Teacher Education Program
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS ANONYMOUS. Please do not write your name on it.

DIRECTIONS: On the left below are a list of attributes. To the right of each is a scale. The task is to indicate with a check mark (✓) the extent you expect the attribute is more likely to be found in children from one parent families or more likely to be found in children from two parent families.

EXAMPLE

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
<u>Attribute</u>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> In Children from 1 Parent Family In Children from 2 Parent Family </div>				
Lives with both parents	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> ✓ </div>				

In this example, the respondent has indicated that s/he expects that children from 2 parent families are much more likely to be living with both their parents than children from 1 parent families.

It is important that you respond to each attribute frankly. There are no correct answers; your feelings are valuable to us. Please try not to spend a lot of time on any one attribute. Your first reaction is usually the best.

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
<u>Attribute</u>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> In Children from 1 Parent Family In Children from 2 Parent Family </div>				
1. craves attention	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
2. accepts others readily	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
3. high motivation to achieve	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
4. insecurity	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
5. creativity	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
6. undisciplined	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
7. truant	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				
8. poor reading skills	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; position: relative; margin: 2px 0;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; right: 0; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; margin: 0 5px;"></div> </div>				

Please continue on next page

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
9. cooperates with peers					
10. incomplete homework					
11. embarrassed about family					
12. high academic achievement					
13. confused sex-role identity					
14. high self-esteem					
15. positive attitude toward school					
16. frequent expression of anger					
17. unhappy					
18. good written expression					
19. defiant					
20. overly fearful					

Finally, would you please answer the following questions about yourself. Please CIRCLE your answers.

21. Which sex are you?

1. FEMALE
2. MALE

22. Which of the following best describes you?

1. BLACK
2. WHITE
3. HISPANIC
4. OTHER (please specify)

23. What is your present age?

1. UNDER 21
2. 21-29
3. 30-39
4. 40-49
5. 50-59
6. 60-69
7. 70 OR OVER

Please continue on next page

24. What is your present marital status?

1. SINGLE
2. MARRIED, SPOUSE PRESENT
3. MARRIED, SPOUSE ABSENT
4. DIVORCED
5. WIDOWED
6. REMARRIED

25. Are you a parent?

1. NO
2. YES (If yes)

26. Do your children live with you?

1. NO
2. YES

29. Which of these best describes your usual stand on political issues?

1. CONSERVATIVE
2. MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD
3. LIBERAL

27. During your average teaching year, approximately how many children from 1 parent families have you had contact with?

1. 0
2. 1-3
3. 4-7
4. 8-10
5. 11 OR MORE
6. NO IDEA

28. What was your total family income during 1979?

1. LESS THAN \$10,000
2. \$10,000 to \$14,999
3. \$15,000 to \$24,999
4. \$25,000 to \$30,000
5. OVER \$30,000

Please feel free to make any additional comments here.

Thank you very much. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the attached card (NOT on this questionnaire). We will see that you get it.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts
Amherst 01003

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
 354 Hills South

May 1, 1980

Dear Parent:

Never before have we been so concerned about families: our own, our friends', our nation's families. Due to a rising divorce rate and other social factors, many children now live in single parent families. Yet there is still much we need to know about these children. Your opinions can help fill this gap.

Teachers are a significant force in children's lives. We need to know how they feel about children. This information can assist teachers, counselors and administrators in making decisions about teacher training, curriculum and school policies which effect the lives of children. Equally important are parents' views of how teachers feel about their children.

You are one of a small number of parents who are being asked to express their views about how teachers feel about children from single parent and two parent families. A group of teachers is also being asked to express their feelings. In order for the results to be truly representative, your completion and return of the enclosed questionnaire is necessary. If you are not a parent, please indicate at the top of the questionnaire that a mistake has been made and return it to me. Your unanswered questionnaire will suggest that your name be crossed of the mailing list. Thanks.

Please be assured of complete confidentiality. The information collected will be reported without your name or any other identifying factors. You will notice that the questionnaire has an identification number on it. This is for mailing purposes only so that your name can be checked off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned.

Your responses to the questions are valuable. Please feel free to make any additional comments on the last page. If you would like to receive a summary of the results, write "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope and print your name and address below it. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have. Please write or call. My telephone number is 1-549-0247.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Elinor R. Levine
 Director, Explorations Teacher Education Program

FAMILY LIFESTYLES PROJECT



Explorations Teacher Education Program
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS ANONYMOUS. Please do not write your name on it.

DIRECTIONS: On the left below are a list of attributes. To the right of each is a scale. The task is to indicate with a check mark (✓) how you feel teachers would respond. Would teachers expect the attribute is more likely to be found in children from 1 parent families or more likely to be found in children from 2 parent families?

EXAMPLE

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
Lives with both parents					✓

In this example, the respondent has indicated that s/he feels teachers expect that children from 2 parent families are much more likely to be living with both their parents than children from 1 parent families.

It is important that you respond to each attribute frankly. There are no correct answers, your feelings are valuable to us. Please try not to spend a lot of time on any one attribute. Your first reaction is usually the best.

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
1. craves attention					
2. accepts others readily					
3. high motivation to achieve					
4. insecurity					
5. creativity					
6. undisciplined					
7. truant					
8. poor reading skills					

Please continue on next page

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
9. cooperates with peers					
10. incomplete homework					
11. embarrassed about family					
12. high academic achievement					
13. confused sex-role identity					
14. high self-esteem					
15. positive attitude toward school					
16. frequent expression of anger					
17. unhappy					
18. good written expression					
19. defiant					
20. overly fearful					

Finally, would you please answer the following questions about yourself. Please CIRCLE your answers.

21. Which sex are you?

1. FEMALE

2. MALE

22. Which of the following best describes you?

1. BLACK

2. WHITE

3. HISPANIC

4. OTHER (please specify)

23. What is your present age?

1. UNDER 21

2. 21-29

3. 30-39

4. 40-49

5. 50-59

6. 60-69

7. 70 OR OVER

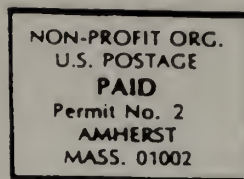
Please continue on next page

24. What is your present marital status?
1. SINGLE
 2. MARRIED, SPOUSE PRESENT
 3. MARRIED, SPOUSE ABSENT
 4. DIVORCED
 5. WIDOWED
 6. REMARRIED
25. Are you a parent?
1. NO
 2. YES (If yes)
26. Does your child(ren) presently attend elementary school in Greenfield?
1. NO
 2. YES
27. Does your child(ren) presently attend junior or senior high school in Greenfield?
1. NO
 2. YES
28. What was your total family income during 1979?
1. LESS THAN \$10,000
 2. \$10,000 to \$14,999
 3. \$15,000 to \$24,999
 4. \$25,000 to \$30,000
 5. OVER \$30,000
29. Which of these best describes your usual stand on political issues?
1. CONSERVATIVE
 2. MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD
 3. LIBERAL

Please feel free to make any additional comments here.

Thank you very much. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire). We will see that you get it.

Explorations Teacher Education Program
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003



May 8, 1980

Last week a questionnaire asking your views about how teachers feel about children from single and two parent families was mailed to you. If you have already completed and returned it to us please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. Because it has been sent to only a small number of parents in the _____ area, it is extremely important that your responses to the questionnaire be included in the study results.

If for some reason you did not receive the questionnaire or it was misplaced, please call me right now, collect 1-549-0247 and I will send you another one in the mail today.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Elinor R. Levine.

Elinor R. Levine
Director,
Family Lifestyles Project

APPENDIX B

Pilot Questionnaire and Accompanying Letter to Teachers



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
370 Hills South

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts
Amherst 01003

January 23, 1980

Dear Teacher:

As a colleague working on a doctoral study, I am asking your assistance in the piloting of a questionnaire regarding attributes of children from single and dual parent families. Information ascertained from this study should be particularly relevant to teachers as it may aid them in making future curriculum and policy decisions.

Since the questionnaire will be sent to 500 teachers in Connecticut, it is important that any "kinks" be ironed out beforehand. Who would be a better source of feedback than you? No one; that is why I'd appreciate your giving me 10 minutes of what I know to be valuable time to fill out and make comments and suggestions on the attached questionnaire.

at Middle School is assisting me in the distribution and collection of the questionnaire. Please return your completed questionnaire to him (through inter-office mail, if necessary). The information collected will be held in complete confidence and a summary of the results will be sent to you if you write your name and address on the last page of the questionnaire.

Again, many thanks for your willingness to share your valuable time and expertise with me.

Sincerely yours,

Elinor Levine

Elinor Levine

ATTRIBUTES OF CHILDREN FROM
ONE AND TWO PARENT FAMILIES



Explorations Teacher Education Program
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS ANONYMOUS. Please do not write your name on it.

DIRECTIONS: On the left below are a list of attributes. To the right of each is a scale. The task is to indicate with a check mark (✓) the extent you expect the attribute is more likely to be found in children from one parent families or more likely to be found in children from two parent families.

EXAMPLE:

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
Attribute	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
Lives with both parents					✓

In this example, the respondent has indicated that s/he expects that children from 2 parent families are much more likely to be living with both their parents than children from 1 parent families.

It is important that you respond to each attribute frankly. There are no correct answers; your feelings are valuable to us. Please try not to spend a lot of time on any one attribute. Your first reaction is usually the best.

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
Attribute	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
1. craves attention					
2. independent					
3. accepts others readily					
4. passiveness					
5. good verbal ability					
6. high motivation to achieve					
7. insecurity					

Please continue on next page

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
8. creativity					
9. psychosomatic illness					
10. undisciplined					
11. low I.Q.					
12. adjusts to new situations easily					
13. truant					
14. poor reading skills					
15. cooperates with peers					
16. incomplete homework					
17. embarrassed about family					
18. high academic achievement					
19. sociable					
20. good analytical skills					
21. confused sex-role identity					
22. high self-esteem					
23. positive attitude toward school					
24. frequent expression of anger					
25. good written expression					

Please continue on next page

Attribute	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	As Likely As	Somewhat More Likely	Much More Likely
	In Children from 1 Parent Family			In Children from 2 Parent Family	
26. short attention span					
27. aggressiveness					
28. requests extra projects					
29. relates well to adults					
30. participates eagerly in activities					
31. defiant					
32. nervous					
33. uses bad language					
34. unhappy					
35. steals					
36. assumes leadership					
37. messy work					
38. overly fearful					
39. hostile					
40. withdrawn					
41. sexually precocious					

Please continue on next page

Finally, would you please answer the following questions about yourself. Please CIRCLE your answers.

42. Which sex are you?

- 1. FEMALE
- 2. MALE

43. Which of the following best describes you?

- 1. BLACK
 - 2. WHITE
 - 3. HISPANIC
 - 4. OTHER (please specify)
-

44. What is your present age?

- 1. UNDER 21
- 2. 21-29
- 3. 30-39
- 4. 40-49
- 5. 50-59
- 6. 60-69
- 7. 70 OR OVER

45. What is your present marital status?

- 1. SINGLE
- 2. MARRIED, SPOUSE PRESENT
- 3. MARRIED, SPOUSE ABSENT
- 4. DIVORCED
- 5. WIDOWED
- 6. REMARRIED

46. Are you a parent?

- 1. NO
- 2. YES (If yes)

47. Do your children live with you?

- 1. NO
- 2. YES

48. During your average teaching year, approximately how many children from 1 parent families have you had contact with?

- 1. 0
- 2. 1-3
- 3. 4-7
- 4. 8-10
- 5. 11 OR MORE
- 6. NO IDEA

49. What was your total family income during 1978?

- 1. LESS THAN \$10,000
- 2. \$10,000 to \$14,999
- 3. \$15,000 to \$24,999
- 4. \$25,000 to \$30,000
- 5. OVER \$30,000

50. Which of these best describes your usual stand on political issues?

- 1. CONSERVATIVE
- 2. MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD
- 3. LIBERAL

Please continue on next page

Please feel free to make any additional comments here.

Thank you very much. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire). We will see that you get it.

APPENDIX C
Content Validity Questionnaire
and
Accompanying Letter



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
379 Hills South

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts
Amherst 01003

Dear _____:

Thank you for agreeing to be a validity rater for my study, "Teachers' Attitudes Toward Children from Single Parent Families."

This study seeks to determine if and how teachers' attitudes toward children from two parent families differ from those toward children from single parent families. Four hundred elementary school teachers in Connecticut will receive the questionnaire in the mail along with a cover letter.

The information I want to attain from you can be summarized by three general questions: 1) how appropriate for inclusion in this study are the attributes contained in the pilot questionnaire; 2) how well do the attributes represent the subscales as they are defined in this study; and 3) what are your overall reactions to and suggestions for improving the pilot questionnaire?

Enclosed you will find a copy of the pilot questionnaire, an addressed return envelope, and the validity questionnaire to be filled out by you. I would greatly appreciate your completing the questionnaire and returning it to me by _____.

Again, I'd like to thank you for your willingness to spare your valuable time and expertise with me.

Sincerely,

Elinor Levine

Elinor Levine

EL/sk

Enclosures

P.S. Please let me know if you'd like a summary of the results of this study and/or any other information pertaining to it.

VALIDITY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR "TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD CHILDREN FROM SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES"

Part I

The following attributes are intended to measure differences in teachers' attitudes toward children from one parent and two parent families. I'm interested in knowing how appropriate you feel each attribute is for inclusion in such a survey. Please indicate your response with a check mark (✓) on the scales below. If you feel any attributes are inappropriate or questionable for inclusion, please explain in the space provided below.

Attribute	Very Appropriate	Appropriate	Not So Appropriate (Questionable)	Inappropriate
1. craves attention	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. independent	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. accepts others readily	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. passiveness	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. good verbal ability	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. high motivation to achieve	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. insecurity	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. creativity	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. psychosomatic illness	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Attribute	Not so Appropriate			
	Very Appropriate	Appropriate	(Questionable)	Inappropriate
10. Undisciplined				
11. low I.Q.				
12. adjusts to new situations easily				
13. brunt				
14. poor reading skills				
15. cooperates with peers				
16. incomplete memory				
17. embarrassed about family				
18. high academic achievement				
19. sociable				
20. good analytical skills				

COMMENTS.

Attribute	Very Appropriate				Not So Appropriate (Questionable)				Inappropriate			
21. confused sex- role identity												
22. high self- esteem												
23. positive attitude toward school												
24. frequent expression of anger												
25. good written expression												
26. short attention span												
27. aggressiveness												
28. requests extra projects												
29. relates well to adults												
30. participates eagerly in activities												

COMMENTS:

Attribute	<div> <div>Very</div> <div>Appropriate</div> <div>Appropriate</div> <div>Not So Appropriate (Questionable)</div> <div>Inappropriate</div> </div>			
31. defiant				
32. nervous				
33. uses bad language				
34. unhappy				
35. steals				
36. assumes leadership				
37. messy work				
38. overly fearful				
39. hostile				
40. withdrawn				
41. sexually precocious				

COMMENTS:

Part II

The preceding scales contain two subscales. One subscale represents a psycho-social dimension, the other an academic dimension. I'm interested in knowing how well you feel attributes represent the subscales within which they've been placed.

Subscale 1. The psycho-social dimension is defined in this study as mental or emotional attributes which may impact on either the development of constructive relationships with other people or the healthy development of the individual child. The attributes in this subscale are intended to test the following hypothesis: Teachers expect that children from single parent families are more likely to exhibit psycho-social difficulties than children from two parent families.

Directions: Please indicate with a check mark (✓) on the scales below how well you feel each attribute represents the psycho-social dimension. If you feel any attribute questionably or poorly represents the psycho-social dimension, would you please explain why in the space provided below.

Attribute	Very Well	Well	Not So Well (Questionable)	Poorly
1. craves attention				
2. independent				
3. accepts others readily				
4. passiveness				
5. insecurity				
6. psychosomatic illness				

COMMENTS:

Attribute	Very Well	Well	Not So Well (Questionable)	Poorly
7. undisciplined				
8. adjusts to new situations easily				
9. cooperates with peers				
10. embarrassed about family				
11. sociable				
12. confused sex-role identity				
13. high self-esteem				
14. frequent expression of anger				
15. aggressiveness				
16. relates well to adults				
17. defiant				

COMMENTS:

Attribute	Very Well	Well	Not So Well (Questionable)	Poorly
13. nervous				
19. uses bad language				
20. unnaughty				
21. steals				
22. assumes leadership				
23. overly fearful				
24. hostile				
25. withdrawn				
26. sexually precocious				
COMMENTS				

Subscale 2: The academic dimension is defined in this study as attributes which may directly impact on the accomplishment of learning. These attributes are intended to test the following hypothesis: Teachers expect that children from single parent families are more likely to exhibit lower academic achievement than children from two parent families.

Directions: Please indicate with a check mark (✓) on the scales below how well you feel each attribute represents the academic dimension. If you feel any attribute questionably or poorly represents the academic dimension, would you again please explain why in the space provided below.

Attribute	Very Well	Well	Not So Well (Questionable)	Poorly
1. good verbal ability				
2. high motivation to achieve				
3. low I.Q.				
4. creativity				
5. poor reading skills				
6. incomplete homework				
7. high academic achievement				

COMMENTS:

Attribute	Very Well	Well	Not So Well (Questionable)	Poorly
8. good analytical skills				
9. positive attitude toward school				
10. good written expression				
11. short attention span				
12. requests extra projects				
13. participates eagerly in activities				
14. messy work				
15. truant				
COMMENTS:				

Part III

Below please list other attributes you think might be appropriate for inclusion in this survey.

You've probably noticed that the format for this questionnaire is very similar to the study's pilot questionnaire. Would you please comment on the ease or difficulty you had with this format.

Do you have any suggestions for making the pilot questionnaire easier to fill out?

Can you suggest any other formats which might better assess teachers' attitudes toward children from single parent families? Please explain.

Do you have any suggestions for making the pilot questionnaire more attractive?

Please use this space for any additional comments or suggestions you'd care to make.

Again, many thanks for your time and assistance.

APPENDIX D

Responses to the Final Item on the Questionnaire

Responses to the Final Item on the Questionnaire

"Please feel free to make any additional comments here."

Teachers' Responses

802--You'd probably get better results in a ghetto area.

818--My responses are general impressions and prejudices, not based on specific (instances of individuals) recall. I feel, therefore, that they are conjecture and do not have specific validity for a sociological study.

874--One time in a class of 20 "middle-phased" students I asked if anyone who wouldn't mind would raise their hand if they were not living with their 2 natural parents (this had to do with a story we were discussing). Fourteen students raised their hand. In an "upper-level or college phase" on another occasion only two students were not in a two-parent family.

878--The more I read and hear that "problems always arise in one-parent families" the more I'm beginning to question the statement--My classroom experience seems to indicate that there are many one-parent situations that seem to be doing okay--and many two-parent situations that have problems--I think a one-parent home may be the cause of some problems, but it is not the obvious conclusion--some of these homes have beautiful kids coming from them.

879--Good project to undertake.

880--I feel that children of one-parent homes are much more likely to act out their anger in all sorts of ways. They seem to always be in some emotional difficulty.

Single Parents' Responses

206--Are you considering the phenomenon that is becoming more frequent all the time--shared custody, either legally defined or in fact? I feel that many teachers' perceptions (and societys' in general) about children from single-parent or dual/separate parent homes are invalid. I believe that 25% (or so) of children in single-parent homes and 25% (or so) of children in two-parent homes suffer unhappiness and insecurity, etc., that is related to their parents' unhappiness and insecurity. What will you do with the results of this study?

- 211--My beliefs about how teachers perceive students from one-parent families don't coincide with the way I perceive my child (age 9). He had been in a single-parent environment until two months ago, when I married. He has always appeared happy and well-adjusted --very rarely gets into any trouble at school--and is well liked by all his classmates, according to his teachers. He does well in school--especially math, but is also doing well in reading (top group). The one cloud over him has been no father, but that has changed because he adores my husband, and calls him "My Dad." Perhaps he's one of the lucky ones--I hope so!
- 227--I have worked with several teachers in the schools on a volunteer basis, and have heard remarks and noticed general attitude differences towards children from one-parent families. Generally, it was used as an excuse for a habitual classroom disrupter, or a poor achiever. If the child did happen to come from a one-parent situation, it was generally pointed out as a major cause.
- 228--I have found that my son's teachers didn't know (and probably didn't care) about my marital status. We were divorced when he was only 18 mos. old and lived apart for 5½ years, so my little boy has only had a man to relate to for the past year and a half, and I can see that he is developing more self-confidence and is not as shy in school. I don't know if that has anything to do with his father's return or not. He has always done extremely well academically and has never had a behavior problem in school.
- 240--I believe that even though a child is from a one-parent family it mainly depends on the programming of the parent whether or not that child will be lacking in the social, emotional or educational areas. Environment is the factor. Teachers are subject to individuals from different environments as is the teacher. Please may all teachers have open minds and compassion for those less fortunate.
- 269--I have found the personal contact with teachers in the K to 6th grades to be a help in both parties understanding the single parent's problems as well as helping the child. This contact is missing at Jr. high and Sr. high level.
- 297--I sincerely believe it is not truly an issue whether there be two parents, one parent or 4 parents in a child's life and environment. The issue is rather does the child receive the love, caring, attention and support he or she or they need and deserve if they are to grow to be strong, well-balanced individuals. This can be achieved no matter what the numbers!
- 358--I do not feel that teachers think or act autonomously from the total school system, which embodies the expectations (assumptions)

that children come from two-parent homes, and that this is the ideal arrangement. My child came home with a notice for a father/son picnic and activity day--from a school that has a large number of single-parent children who live with mothers. There is an assumption that the very presence of two parents automatically insures a better home environment/models, etc. This can not be justified, given the incidence of divorce, abuse, battered women, and unhappy marital arrangements; nor can it be justified given male socialization which often makes the father no more than an authoritarian figurehead. What is at issue is good parenting, not who is or is not present. It is my belief that good parenting can and does occur in single-parent homes. Also, many homes are continuous, extending from the single-parent to include the households of parents, children or friends in the shared parenting process. The total school environment, including books, activities etc. should be re-evaluated in light of this perspective.

378--I feel it is very important to educate incoming teachers about classism, sexism, racism, and heterosexism, as well as being able to really see each student as an individual. Today many people are prejudiced against anyone who is different from them. Teaching an openness to differences would be helpful. My son has luckily had teachers who, if not at first, realize his worth as a human being. Of course, he is very bright which helps a great deal. He is also very well-adjusted. They also see him as middle-class, like themselves. He has an ability to get along with many different kinds of people because of living with me $\frac{1}{2}$ of the time and with his father the other $\frac{1}{2}$. Also if you do this again, I suggest you include in your cover letter how you got the person's name. This would interest me a great deal. Some people may not respond because of this. The number is long distance so some people may not call, merely put the whole survey in the "circular file."

408--I have been both widowed and divorced. Each time my experience with teachers feelings has been positive...however, I do feel there is too much emphasis placed on single parenting for whatever the reason divorced, etc. It's the individual's situation that should be the concern.

481--Teachers, as well as administrators, appear to be unaware of the single parents influence upon the development of a child. Especially the absent parent! Communication with the absent parent is nearly non-existent. However, the absent parent continues to influence the child through learning experiences, love, and continued attention to education, but his involvement with teachers and administrators is negligible, at best. Teachers that pre-judge child development according to that child's parental environment should go back to school.

- 641--Somewhat difficult to answer some questions--I found myself torn between how I perceive being projected in the way I felt teachers feel re: the issues. Hopefully, one day the feelings will merge on both parts and teachers will not let their insecurities about single-parent families influence them in their teaching practices. Good luck on the survey!
- 642--I have been a single parent bringing up my children (3) and find it harder and believe children with a good two-partner marriage are healthier. Certainly circumstances if one partner has some kind of problem and there is constant conflict in the home 1 single Christian parent is a healthy environment for children; moral principals are an important part of bringing up children...it is a constant effort in these trying times in which we live. Thank you.
- 666--I sincerely feel that children who come from 1-parent families are labeled by teachers. Several families and myself had an experience with an older teacher who was abusing children. Not only physically but verbally. The matter was soon settled after a couple of parents and myself requested our children be transferred out of this teacher's class. Six months later she finally retired. I strongly feel that teachers should not label children because they are from single-parent homes, live in housing projects, or live on the wrong side of town. I hope your survey enlightens many teachers for the sake of some good kids.
- 701--I live in _____, am single mother with 5 children, ages 11-3. I feel that no matter what the problems in school are, the teachers are usually thinking that they are caused by divorce. In 1st grade, the teacher started grading the students with letters (A, B, C, D, F) and my daughter was terrified that she wouldn't go to 2nd grade unless she got all A's. This affected her attitude, but when time for the report card came, the teacher said Chris seemed insecure, and she was afraid she was reacting to the divorce (even though the split had come 6-7 mos. earlier and she had exhibited no great insecurity up to that point). I think teachers feel that it's not o.k. to live with one parent and try to reinforce their beliefs by a much more careful scrutiny and examination of the students from these families.

Dual Parents' Responses

- 404--1) A superbly stupid questionnaire! Too many variables. How do I know how the teacher thinks....its only a guess--2) single working parent vs. single non-working parent. 2½) In 2-parent family 1 parent working--both working--no one working--3) abusive vs. non-abusive both single and two parent. 4) Nuclear family vs.

extended family--5) well to do vs. very poor or even middle of road children--type of home--single family home--apartment building --6) Developmental and chronological age at time of divorce or separation. 7) rural vs. urban.

440--In many cases, the quality of the time spent with a child is the most important factor with relationship to problems such as discipline and insecurity, and I feel this is as big a problem in families with one parent as two.

490--I am definitely a supporter of two-parent families.

497--My daughter is three years old. She knows her colors, numbers 1 to 20 and her alphabet. I hope when she gets into school, they can hold her attention. The children of today have a lot more on the ball than when I was a kid.

537--Believe this free wheeling attitude of so called self expression has contributed nothing more than a complete deterioration of a child's basic education. As a parent I feel it's high time that the schools get back to teaching basic education, responsibility, respect and the pride of accomplishment. In today's world, without these essential tools, I believe these adults of tomorrow's world are going to have a tough row to hoe.

590--Coming from a 1-parent family--I, myself have found that I'm more fearful, angry and insecure than my peers from a 2-parent family. For the most part, I believe the difference in attitude of a child is dependent on how well the parent or parents are able to deal with themselves and their own shortcomings. It's easy to say "This child is having problems adjusting, it's understandable, the parents are divorced."

649--Please note, the checked answers are what I think teachers do feel. Not at all what I prefer, would feel, or what I wish were true. I would be more than happy to participate in any other informative surveys you do.

655--I think there might be one/two answers for Question 8. Some children from 2-parent family homes may have poor reading skills although children from one-parent families seem as though they might have an increased risk of being poor readers.

678--Being a member of a two-parent family, I feel there are many 1-parent families that do a good job bringing up their children. I feel it is an individual family upbringing whether it turns out good or bad. I don't feel you can judge a family, whether one or two parents involved.

